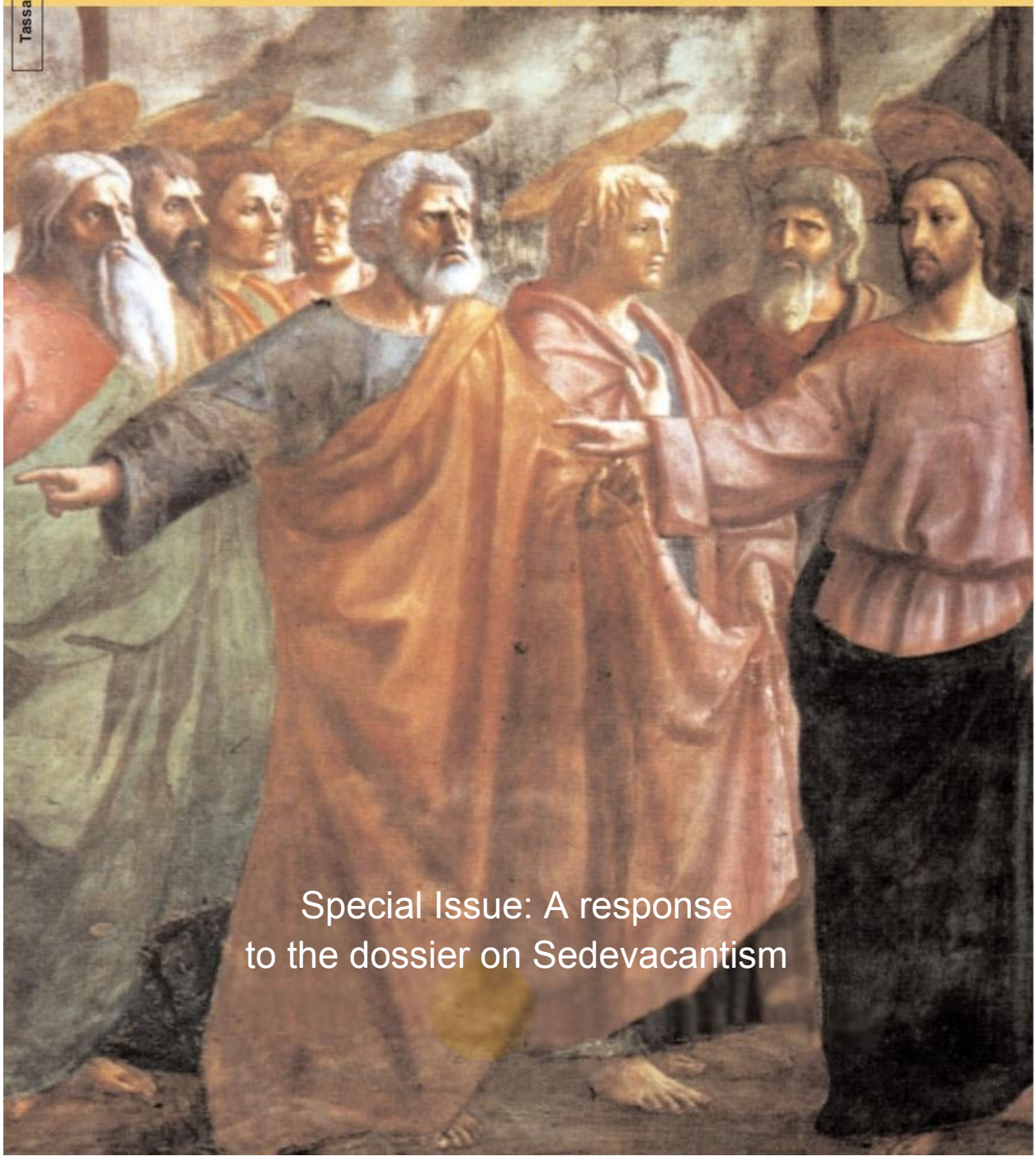
Tassa Riscossa - Taxe Perçue. ASTI CPO

SODALITIUM

N. 56

Anno XIX n. 2 - Settembre 2003 - Sped. a. p. - art. 2 - comma 20/c, Legge 662/96 - Filiale di Asti - Organo ufficiale del Centro Librario *Sodalitium* - Loc. Carbignano, 36. 10020 VERRUA SAVOIA (TO) Tel. +39.0161.839.335 - Fax +39.0161.839.334 - IN CASO DI MANCATO RECAPITO, RINVIARE ALL'UFFICIO C.R.P. ASTI PER RESTITUZIONE AL MITTENTE CHE SI IMPEGNA A CORRISPONDERE LA RELATIVA TARIFFA



Special Issue: A response
to the dossier on Sedevacantism

"*Sodalitium*" Magazine -
No. 56 Anno XIX n. 2/2003

Publisher: *Centro Librario Sodalitium*

Loc. Carbignano, 36, 10020 VERRUA SAVOIA TO
Tel: 0161.839335 Fax: 0161.839334
INTERNET: www. Sodalitium.it
Email: info@sodalitium.it
CCP 36390334

Managing Director: *don Francesco Ricossa*
Author. Tribunale di IVrea n. 116 del 24-2-84
Printing: - Ages Torino
English translation: Gregory DeSaye

Pursuant to Law 675/96 on the protection of personal data, the data provided by the subscribers of the subscriptions will be treated in paper and automated form and will be used exclusively for sending the newspaper subject to subscription or others our publications as essay copies and will not be communicated to third parties. The provision of data is optional and possible exercise the rights referred to in article 13 by making a request to the data processing manager: Centro Librario Sodalitium.

On the cover: Jesus, Saint Peter and the Apostles in *the paying of the tribute* (detail) Fresco by Masaccio, Florence Santa Maria del Carmine, Brancacci Chapel

Table of Contents

Editorial p. 2
CONTROVERSIES
Response to the special issue of "La Tradizione Cattolica" on sedevacantism p. 4
The "Thesis of Cassiciacum" in question. Response to the "*Tour de David*" and to "*Le sel de la terre*" p. 53
"The election of the Pope". Reactions and comments on one of our articles p. 61
Our position on the Mass of May 24 at Santa Maria Maggiore p. 65
Third denial to Dr. Heller and his magazine "Einischt"
Brief response to the magazine "*La voie*" on the "Secret of La Salette"
Know yourself and become who you are
BOOK REVIEWS
The mystery of the blindfolded synagogue
The Easter Vigil according to Robert Amiet
Institute Life

Editorial

This is not the first time that you've received a special edition of *Sodalitium*. A special issue is monothematic; perhaps risking some disinterest on the part of our readers. We apologize, therefore, assuring you that our magazine will return to its usual themes and its variety of articles and collaborators.

If we found ourselves called to release this special edition, once again dedicated to our theological position on the current situation of authority in the Church after Vatican II, it is due to another special edition dedicated to sedevacantism, this one by the magazine of the Italian District of the Society of Saint Pius X, *La Tradizione Cattolica*. *Sodalitium* is thus responding, as it is our duty, to this dossier issued by the priests of Archbishop Lefebvre on the question of the vacant see and the Thesis of Cassiciacum, as elaborated by Bishop M.-L. Guérard des Lauriers. And while on this subject, we are also publishing two other responses on the same theme, one to the Dominican magazine *Le Sel de la terre* (which also takes Lefebvrist positions), and one from Father Grossin's newsletter (who on the opposite holds a position of strict sedevacantism).

While discussing the "greatest systems", however, events are developing and cannot but help attract our interest. In the ecclesiastic world, there is much talk about the latest encyclical by John Paul II on the Eucharist, and on the Mass celebrated on May 24th at Santa Maria Maggiore by Cardinal Castrillon Hoyos. You will find in this special edition a brief article which is our stance on the celebration of that Mass by the Colombian prelate and more generally on the possibility of celebrating the Mass with the authorization of those who occupy the Episcopal Sees. The initiative for the Mass celebrated at Santa Maria Maggiore was born in Turin, in the environment of the Latin Mass celebrated with

the indult in the Chiesa della Misericordia (known in the city as the Church of the hanged). On the doors of the Church, on the 6th of May, there were two notices. On one door was written: "*Holy Mass in Latin with the ancient rite and Gregorian chant (authorized by the Archbishop of Turin)*. And on the other: *Basic Course on Ecumenism, Year II. Our common profession of faith. Orthodox Greek Church. Catholic Church. Waldensian Church. Romanian Orthodox Church.* All organized by the *Diocesan Catholic Commission for Ecumenism and Dialogue*. The Archbishop of Turin who "authorized" the Mass "with the ancient rite" is responsible for the Commission that spreads the heresy of ecumenism in the dioceses (and even in the very church with the indult for the Mass of Saint Pius V!)

The same mixture of Catholicism and error is found in the encyclical *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, where admirable quotes from the Council of Trent are embedded in a modernist style and mentality (even as regards the historicity of the Gospel), Teilhardism (n.8) and ecumenism: for example inter-communion is approved again (n.44), the value of the sacrilegious Canon 844 is reiterated (in this Canon non-Catholics are authorized, under certain circumstances, to receive three sacraments from Catholics, and vice-versa, Catholics are authorized to receive the same sacraments from non Catholics - which is against Canons 731§2, 855, 856, 1258 of the Pius Benedictine Code). The *encyclical* by John Paul II expresses a new conception of the

The Pontifical Mass of Cardinal Castrillon Hoyos in Rome on May 24th

American President Bush at the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem

Eucharist and of the Church that a Catholic cannot make his own.

In the political sphere, two questions - it seems to us - merit being mentioned: the draft of the European Constitution, and the war waged by the United States and Great Britain against Iraq. John Paul II rightly recalls that no human constitution can ignore God, and that Europe cannot conceive of itself without its "christian roots". It seems, however, that this position is doctrinally reductive and practically ineffective. Doctrinally reductive because a society must not be founded on a "God" who can also be the Great Architect of the Universe, but rather on the Holy Trinity, on Jesus Christ and on His kingship, denied by Vatican II. Practically ineffective, because even if it will be achieved (which is doubtful), the Constitutional reference to "christian roots" (or better, Judeo-Christian - which may be an unfortunate oxymoron), will achieve only a Christian "blessing" to the anti-Christian laws that the aforementioned Constitution will, in reality, promote. Better, probably, an anathema than a useless compromise. The French Lodges proclaim atheism, the Anglo-Saxons invoke God; the latter are certainly no closer to us than the former.

The war in Iraq didn't begin with the Gulf war, but with the Israeli bombardment in 1986, aimed at preventing the Baathists from possessing that atomic bomb which the Jewish state possesses without problems. Many Catholics who are classified as "traditionalists" (but who attend, at best, Masses "with the indult of the diocesan authority") had no fear of contradicting the Vatican in this case,

glorifying the United States' aggression as a "*just war*" or even an anti-muslim crusade, like those preached by Father Marco d'Aviano. Without prejudice to the fact that the doctrine of *just war* is part of the social doctrine of the Church, which we approve, we cannot consider to be a *just war* an aggression (founded on a lie regarding "weapons of mass destruction" which, in the Near East, only Israel possesses) which certainly does not have as its aim the defense of Christianity, but the defense of Zionism. The elusive Bin Laden invents an Islamic Holy War "against the Jews and the Crusaders"? And so, symmetrically, an invented just war of the neo-Crusaders Bush, Blair and Sharon against the "integralist" Muslims (the others are all good, naturally). As for Crusaders, we ask, at least, that they be Catholic: it doesn't seem like asking too much...

Controversies

Response to the special edition of "*La Tradizione Cattolica*" on sedevacantism (n. 1/2003, 52)

Father Francesco Ricossa

La Tradizione Cattolica, [herein indicated as TC], is the "*official magazine of the Italian District of the Society of Saint Pius X*" since 1986, when - in this role - it replaced our own magazine "*Sodalitium*". The first issue of the year 2003 (n. 52) is monothematic, entirely dedicated to the question of "sedevacantism", the position according to which the Apostolic See is currently vacant.

Abbé Simoulin's editorial. Author, content, purpose of the special issue on "sedevacantism"

The District superior, Abbé Michel Simoulin, presents the "dossier" to the reader in an editorial. As to the author, it is presented as "*a joint effort of the priests of the Italian District*" (p. 3). In reality, and this is well known, the principal author is a single priest of the District: we mention it only because this fact has no small influence on the motivations and the arguments of the writing, which frequently deviates from the usual argumentation of the Society [ed. note, after 20 years: the author was Father Davide Pagliarani]. As to the official character of the writing, "*it does not pretend to be a stance or an official declaration of the Society*" (p. 3). As to the value of its argumentation, "*neither does it intend to directly refute the said thesis.*" By the District Superior's own admission, the dossier lacks authority. As to the people to whom the dossier is directed, it excludes the priests who support "unrefuted" theses: "*this study is directed therefore, not to the 'majors', the doctors or teachers of sedevacantism...*", with whom, evidently, he has no intention of opening any dialogue or discussion: "*surely God has more mercy for the simple (...) than he has for the learned*" (p. 4).

Note that this refusal to dialogue contradicts what was written in the premise to the Dossier (pp. 6-7), but this comes as no surprise, given what has been mentioned about the true author of the same...

Abbé Simoulin of the Italian district of the FSSPX

If the TC doesn't aim at "sedevacantist" priests, to whom does it speak? To two categories of people: to the "sedevacantist" faithful, and to his own readers. "Sedevacantists" faithful are all depicted as "*mostly simple people who trust their teachers (...) without always having studied or having understood the arguments.*" The Dossier then addresses the faithful of the Society: who "*may be disturbed by accusations and criticisms made against the Society, so that they know that we are not lacking in intelligence or theological science - as some try to make people believe - nor do we lack the courage to face a most difficult situation*" (p. 4).

The disturbance among many faithful of the Society, about which Abbé Simoulin speaks, is therefore the reason that compels him to emerge from his consistently maintained silence regarding the problem and, in particular, our magazine. Without quoting *Sodalitium*, Abbé Simoulin had already been forced to give a response in *Roma felix* regarding the Tribunals created by the Society (*Sodalitium*, n. 52, November 2000) or on the canonization of saints (*Sodalitium*, n. 54, June 2002), and especially after it was revealed that Father Ugo Carandino left as Prior of Rimini at the Society (*Sodalitium*, n. 53, December 2001) to become a member of the Istituto *Mater Boni Consilii*. The silence observed until now, certainly was not due to the desire "*not to embitter our relationship with priests who were once our brethren or with the faithful who were once our friends*" (TC, p. 4), but rather to the Society's desire of not giving the least space or minimum notoriety to any theses that differ from theirs: "*We must radically ignore those who left us, whether they attack us, or say good things about us*" - wrote Abbé Simoulin to the priests in the Italian District of the Society on January 26, 1998 - "*There are certain names we must never pronounce in writing: Sodalitium, Simple Letter, Paladino, Milani, Vinson, etc...*" (see *Opportune, Importune*, n. 5, Easter 2003, p. 1).

Pope Pius IX defined Pontifical Infallibility During the First Vatican Council

The special edition of *La Tradizione Cattolica* therefore marks an important moment in the history of Catholic opposition to Vatican II: the moment in which, even in Italy, the Society had to publicly admit that the question of the Vacant See cannot be unaddressed. We are happy about this.

The Dossier: "Sedevacantism: A False Solution to a Real Problem"

After having examined Abbé Simoulin's editorial, we move on to the "dossier" on sedevacantism.

Part I: CRITICS ABOUT THE METHOD

What the dossier promises and does not deliver...

The Dossier begins with a "preface" in which the Author exposes the ends and means for arguing his study. As to the ends, the Author promises the readers - so they can have a fair judgment - to clarify "*what the sedevacantist position is, how it is articulated, and how it is justified*" (p. 6). As to the means, he proposes "*to contribute to the creation of a climate of authentic charity*"

(ibidem). The two-fold intent is praiseworth, but the Author has, unfortunately, failed in his aim. Let's see, first of all, if he really tried to clarify what sedevacantism consists of and how the position is justified...

The Dossier claims to dedicate 20 pages to exposing sedevacantism. In fact, it only dedicates 2.

The principal difficulty encountered in responding to the Dossier on sedevacantism was that of giving some order to the objections and arguments, which were presented in a confused and obscure manner. Added to this difficulty is the fact that the project, as presented in the summary published on page 2, was not followed.

The special edition is actually divided into two parts: "*Part 1: What is sedevacantism?*" (pp. 6-22); and "*Part 2: A false solution*" (pp. 23-62). At least a third of the study, therefore, should have been dedicated, as promised, to the exposition of the Thesis that one wishes to dispute. This was not the case. After the introduction (p. 6-9) the Dossier should have examined, in the first part, the two "sedevacantist" positions: strict sedevacantism and the Thesis of Cassiciacum. To the first position, strict sedevacantism, only a single page or a bit more is dedicated (pp. 9-11). Although we do not embrace this position, we are disconcerted by the caricature-like presentation made of it, reducing strict sedevacantism (called conclavism) to a series of antipopes who played no role in historical and doctrinal elaboration of sedevacantism (of which no word is said). More space was dedicated to the Thesis of Cassiciacum (practically the entire Dossier, and this for reasons strictly tied to the author). But how much space was used to explain the Thesis of Father des Lauriers? In truth, only page 11. The result is that the first part of the work (pp. 6-21), which should have been dedicated to the clear and honest expositions of the two positions to be refuted, instead dedicates to it less than two pages, the rest of the first part consisting of an early criticism of the aforementioned positions.

In particular, the Dossier should have presented the arguments advanced by sedevacantists. But there is no trace of this evidence, which saves the author the strain of refuting them.

An old school axiom states: "Advocating a difficulty is not equivalent to demonstrating an argument to be false." The Dossier, as we will see, will essentially consist of a continuous variation on a single theme: the Dossier advances against sedevacantism - as an objection - the doctrine on the indefectibility of the Church. We will see later how this objection - certainly important - is unconvincing. But the Dossier fails to present the evidence that we put forward to demonstrate that the Apostolic See is (formally) vacant: a scientifically correct work has the duty to exhibit this proof and then demonstrate it is false, something the Dossier is careful not to do.

All this is aimed at underscoring (and exacerbating) the existing divergences between the various sedevacantisms, by which the Author forgets that capital point on which agreement is almost unanimous: John Paul II cannot be Pope precisely by virtue of the dogma of infallibility of the Pope and the Church.

Sedevacantism (which it purports to study) takes steps precisely from the infallibility of the Pope and/or the Church:

infallibility of the ordinary universal magisterium

practical infallibility in promulgating canonical laws

practical infallibility in promulgating liturgical laws

practical infallibility in the canonization of saints.

Now, the Society of Saint Pius X itself admits - and even defends with drawn swords - the thesis according to which there are errors:

in the Vatican Council II
in the new code of Canon Law
in the new rite of the Mass and other liturgical reforms
in some canonizations performed after the Council.

Therefore, de facto, Vatican II and the reforms that followed it are not guaranteed by infallibility when instead they should have been. They cannot come from the Church. They cannot come from the Pope. Paul VI and John Paul II who promulgated and confirmed these acts cannot be the Authority.

The readers of *La Tradizione Cattolica* - in a dossier dedicated to sedevacantism and which claims to explain its justifications - will not find a trace of all this (as for the argument specific to the Thesis of Cassiciacum on the habitual and objective absence of procuring the good/ends of the Church by Paul VI and John Paul II, one will not find an exposition and refutation, but only an allusion, see p. 11, footnote 1).

This omission alone would be enough to totally discredit the TC's sedevacantism Dossier. Two consequences arise from this omission: on the one hand, the Author feels himself exempted - as we said - from having to refute the sedevacantist arguments. On the other hand, it is thus possible for him to accuse the sedevacantists of prejudice and dishonest presumption: if they fail to understand and even distort theology it is because "*for them, the fact that Paul VI and his successors are not popes is a given and acquired fact, consequently Bellarmine and other authoritative authors only serve them, not to search for the truth in an impartial manner, honestly striving to understand what is relevant, but simply to find arguments to demonstrate a truth already taken for granted and acquired from the beginning (...) even in them [the Guérardians] we sometimes find the attitude of those who claim to reconcile theology and reality with an already formulated a priori judgment...*" (p. 54) [note that the Dossier writes the opposite on p. 7]. Evidently, if one suppresses the arguments which led to such a serious conclusion as that of the Sede Vacante, such a conclusion can only be the fruit of prejudice, presumption, stubbornness... I ask the Author if, rather, the opposite is true: if his position and that of the priests of the Society is or isn't based on the authoritativeness of Archbishop Lefebvre. And more concretely, I ask: if Archbishop Lefebvre had declared categorically that the See was vacant (as he was on the verge of doing several times) would the Author abandon Archbishop Lefebvre or would he too become a sedevacantist?

The Dossier exacerbates - for its own purposes - the divergences between the sedevacantist positions

If the Dossier does little to explain what sedevacantism consists of and how it is justified, it instead goes into great detail on how "*it is articulated*" (p. 6). The Author admits - rightly - the confusion that has always been made by the Society of Saint Pius X between the two positions in which sedevacantism "is articulated" (strict sedevacantism and the Thesis of Cassiciacum) (p. 13), but then exaggerates the undeniable differences between the two positions to oppose them to each other, and to refute one with the arguments of the other, and vice-versa (see *L'inconciliabilità tra sedevacantismo stretto e Tesi di Cassiciacum*, pp. 12-14). Is it too much to ask that the two positions are presented as they are, with their differences and their agreements? According to the Thesis of Cassiciacum, John Paul II is not formally the Pope; to the question of whether John Paul II is the Pope, the Thesis responds "no". Cassiciacum and sedevacantism formally agree. [(1)]

A "*serene and dispassionate reflection*"? (p. 6)

The Dossier therefore does not keep its promises: the reader will not learn from it what sedevacantism is or how it is justified. Did it at least keep the promise regarding that

climate of authentic charity which is a prerequisite for being able to "*calmly deal with this topic*"? You wouldn't think so, reading attributions to sedevacantist "*confrers*" of "*rancor and venom*" (p. 48), rabbinic (p. 15) or Pharisaical reasoning (pp. 42-43), casting more than doubt on their good faith and intellectual honesty (in this case, mine: p. 56). And the lists of the picturesque sedevacantist antipopes (p. 9) and the bishops consecrated by Archbishop Thuc (pp. 44-45) are not "*innocent*". God forbid, there was no intent to *"ridicule"* the opponent (p. 10), even if, concretely, this will be the effect of the publication of these lists on the readers of the "*La Tradizione Cattolica*"...

The Author's intention was good and, I am convinced, even sincere; but unfortunately it was not realized, because there is still too much animosity that renders it difficult to truly debate objectively.

Part II: The "REAL PROBLEM" AND THE SOLUTION PROPOSED BY "LA TRADIZIONE CATTOLICA".

Before examining the objections that the TC made towards our positions, and our response, it seems opportune to examine the solution to the problem of Authority that the Dossier proposes to its readers. I will begin by recalling what the substance of the dispute is (and its importance), and then I will analyze the proposed solution.

The "real problem": the Pope. The importance of the Pope in Catholic faith and for salvation.

Speaking about sedevacantism means speaking about the Pope (and I write Pope with capital letters, as is right, and as is currently done in Italian, and not in small letters as is the habit in France and how the Dossier writes it - whose author is, however, not French).

I wrote that the greatest absence in the "Dossier" on sedevacantism is sedevacantism itself, what it consists of and how its position is justified. In the same way, and for greater reason, one might say the greatest absence in the "Dossier" is the Pope. And yet, in theory, rejecting the sedevacantist position would mean demonstrating that John Paul II is the legitimate pontiff and the successor of Peter, the Vicar of Christ ("*sweet Christ on earth*", according to Saint Catherine's expression) to whom is due not only hierarchical subordination, but "*true obedience, not only in matters of faith and morals, but also in those regarding the discipline and governance of the Church*" (Vatican I, Pastor aeternus, DS 3060 and 3064). To demonstrate the sedevacantist position as false would mean applying to John Paul II what Vatican I wrote about the Roman Pontiff: "*the apostolic primacy which the Roman Pontiff* [for the TC, John Paul II] *possesses over the universal Church as the successor of Peter, Prince of the Apostles, also includes the supreme power of the magisterium (...). In fact the Fathers of the Council of Constantinople IV, following in the footsteps of their predecessors, formulated this solemn profession of faith: 'The first condition for salvation is to safeguard the rule of right faith. And since the expression of Our Lord Jesus Christ - who said 'You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church' (Mt 16:18) - cannot become a dead letter, this statement factually occurs, because in the Apostolic See the Catholic religion has always been preserved without blemish and Catholic doctrine has always been professed in its sanctity (...).* [The Pope, according to the Council of Lyon] "*as he has the duty to defend, above all, the truth of faith, so also, disputes that arise regarding the faith must be resolved by his judgment. (...)* [Bishops] *"have referred to the Apostolic See, especially for emerging dangers in matters of faith, so that the damage caused to the faith might be repaired, where the faithful cannot detect deficiencies. (...) Therefore, this charism of the truth of faith, never defectible, was accorded by God to Peter and the successors to his See, so that he would exercise this highest office for the salvation of*

all, so that the universal flock of Christ, being protected from the poison bait of error, are nourished with the food of heavenly doctrine and, eliminated any occasion for schism, the whole Church may be preserved in unity, and, established on its foundations, may stand unshakable against the gates of Hell." (Vatican Council I, *Pastor aeternus*, DS 3071-3075). Demonstrating sedevacantism to be false means applying to John Paul II what has been defined regarding the obligation of obedience to the Pope for one's salvation: "*we declare, affirm, and define that to be be submitted to the Roman Pontiff* [and for the TC, that is John Paul II] *is, for every human creature, necessary for salvation*" (Boniface VIII, *Unam sanctam* DS 875); "*no man (...) can be saved in the end, outside of that same faith of the Church itself and of obedience to the Roman Pontiff* [for the TC, that is John Paul II] (Clement VI, DS 1051]; "*among the commandments of Christ then, that which commands us to be incorporated through baptism into the mystical Body of Christ which is the Catholic Church, and to adhere to Christ and His Vicar* [in the case of the TC, that is John Paul II], *He himself* (Christ) *visibly governs the Church on earth. For this reason there can be no salvation for those who, knowing that the Church was divinely instituted by Christ either refuses to submit to the Church or refuses obedience to the Roman Pontiff* [in the case of TC, that is John Paul II], *Vicar of Christ on earth*" (Pius XII, letter from the Holy Office to the Bishop of Boston, DS 3867). To recognize John Paul II without obeying him is equivalent to declaring oneself a schismatic: "*What is the point of proclaiming the Catholic dogma of the primacy of Blessed Peter and his successors, and of having spread so many declarations of Catholic faith and obedience to the Apostolic See, when one's actions in themselves openly deny the words? Doesn't stubbornness become even less excusable the more dutiful the commitment of obedience is recognized? Is it that, perhaps, the authority of the Apostolic see does not extend beyond what has been*

Archbishop Lefebvre and Bishop de Castro Mayer In 1983 signing the open letter to John Paul II

arranged by Us, or is it enough to have communion of faith with it, without the obligation of obedience in order that the Catholic faith be considered safe? (...) In fact, Venerable Fathers and beloved Sons, it is a question of obedience that must be conferred or denied to the Apostolic See; it is a question of recognizing the supreme power, even in your Churches, at least as regards faith, truth and discipline; whosoever denies it is a heretic. Whosoever recognizes it, but proudly refuses to obey it, is worthy of anathema" (Pius IX, Enc. *Quae in patriarchatu*, n. 23 and 24, of September 1, 1876) [(2)]. Obedience which also extends to canonical censures inflicted by the authority: "*the most often-used fraud in obtaining a new schism is to use the name Catholic, which the authors and their followers assume and usurp despite having been reprimanded by Our authority and condemned by Our sentence. It has always been important for heretics and schismatics to declare themselves as Catholics and to say it publicly, boasting of it, to induce people and Princes into error (...)*"; the Pope, rather, teaches that "*anyone declared a schismatic by the Roman Pontiff, until he expressly submits and respects its authority, must cease to usurp the name Catholic in any. All of this cannot be of any benefit to the neo-schismatics who, following in the footsteps of the most recent heretics, went so far as to protest that the*

sentence of schism and excommunication imposed against them in Our name was unjust and therefore of no no account or value (...). These novel arguments were wholly unknown and unheard of by the ancient Fathers of the Church. (...) For this reason the Jansenist heretics dared to teach such doctrines; that is, that an excommunication pronounced by a lawful prelate could be ignored on the pretext of its being unjust, certain of fulfilling their duty despite it - as they said - Our predecessor of happy memory Clement XI in his constitution 'Unigenitus' against the errors of Quesnell forbade and condemned statements of this kind, scarcely different from some articles of John Wyclif's already condemned by the Council of Constance and Martin V. In fact, although it may happen through human weakness that a person could be unjustly punished with censure by his prelate, it is still necessary, as Our predecessor St. Gregory the Great warned, 'that he who is under the guidance of his own Shepherd should have the healthy fear of always being bound, even if unjustly affected, and should not recklessly repudiate the judgment of his own Superior, so that the guilt that did not exist may not become arrogance due to the burning rebuke'. But if one should be afraid even of an unjust condemnation by one's bishop, what must be said of those men who have been condemned for rebelling against their bishop and this Apostolic See and tearing to pieces, as they are now doing, the seamless garment of Christ, which is the Church, by a new schism? (...) But, say the neo schismatics, it was not a case of doctrine but of discipline (...); and therefore to those who object, the name Catholic and its prerogatives should not be denied them. (...) We do not doubt that you know well how vain and worthless this evasion is. For the Catholic Church has always regarded as schismatic those who obstinately oppose the lawful prelates of the Church and in particular, the chief shepherd of all, refusing to carry out their orders and even denying their very rank" (Pius IX, Encyclical *Quartus supra*, January 6, 1873, nn. 6-12) [3].

This is Catholic doctrine, true Catholic Tradition, but not of the homonymous magazine which does not make the slightest reference to it. And this for obvious reasons. In fact, the position of the Society of Saint Pius X is completely opposite to the one just mentioned. They hold that John Paul II is Pope, but that his authority is reduced to a vain word: his magisterium (potestas docendi) is denied not only infallibility, but existence (according to TC, John Paul II would never teach: "*it is clear that in this perspective any type of teaching - in the strict and authentic sense - by John Paul II becomes technically impossible, it loses its raison d'etre and therefore the possibility of existing*" TC p. 25), his governance (potestas regendi) is refused any obedience. And there is no trace, in the entire Dossier, of that love for the Pope that distinguishes a true Catholic.

The "prudential position", the solution of the Society of Saint Pius X to the problem of the authority of the Pope

The Dossier contrasts the sedevacantist position, defined as "*a false solution*", with the "*prudential position*" of the Society of Saint Pius X. What is this position? Faced with the question that arises in the consciences of every Catholic: Is John Paul II - yes or no - the Vicar of Christ to whom one must adhere (in teaching, discipline and ecclesiastic communion) in order to be saved, the "prudential solution" consists in answering: "no one knows". Which is to say that this question is of no real importance to a Catholic.

If anyone thinks that the Dossier on sedevacantism has demonstrated that John Paul II is the Pope, they must think again on the basis of what is written in the Dossier: "*the prudential solution*" proposed, means "*to be able to act on the basis of a sufficient number of elements which, however, do not contemplate the definitive solution to the problem of the authority in the Church*" (p. 20). Indeed, the Society's position would differ from that of the sedevacantists precisely due

to the fact that "*even before differing in content, the position of the Society and those of the sedevacantist differ radically in terms of the level in which they are placed; consequently, any explanation that the Society might advance regarding the situation of the authority of John Paul II is really and qualitatively an element on which it admits the possibility of discussion; in the case of sedevacantism, rather, the basic positions on the authority of John Paul II are absolute, certain and indisputable*" (p. 20). Therefore - coherently - the intent of the Dossier is **not** "*that of demonstrating that John Paul II is pope*" (also p. 20).

This position is - naturally - that of Archbishop Lefebvre, quoted by his anonymous but not unknown disciple: "*perhaps, one day, in thirty of forty years, a session of Cardinals, reunited by a future pope will study and judge the pontificate of Paul VI; perhaps they will say that there were elements that should have been blaring to the eyes of his contemporaries that the affirmations of this pope were absolutely contrary to Tradition* [Archbishop Lefebvre did not wait long to take up that position himself, and on Easter 1986 attributed to himself the possibility of being: "*obliged to believe that this pope is not pope*" ed.] *Up to now, I prefer to consider as pope the one who, at least, is on the throne of Peter; and if one day it would be discovered in a sure way that this pope was not pope, I will still have done my duty*" (p. 62).

Therefore, the Society of Saint Pius X's position "*of charity and prudence*", which in fact excludes every sedevacantist - accused of a schismatic spirit [(4)] - admits in theory the possibility that the Apostolic See is vacant - and that it may be declared as such in the future [(5)].

Let's try to extract some consequences from this position defined as "*necessary*" (p. 20).

First Consequence: the position according to which John Paul II would be Pope is, according to its supporters, not definitive, but relative, uncertain, questionable and not demonstrated.

Second Consequence: all the arguments that the TC's Dossier presents (and we will later examine them) are also arguments which are not definitive, but rather relative, uncertain, questionable and not demonstrated. Otherwise the first consequence would not be true.

Third Consequence: specifically, a future Pope may be able and must tell us whether Paul VI and John Paul II were, yes or no, legitimate pontiffs. "May": therefore the Dossier's argument, which we will deal with later, has no value (Paul VI and John Paul II are Popes because they are recognized by the universal Church; to affirm the contrary would mean that the Church has ceased to exist for a long period of time). "Must": therefore John Paul II is not a Pope who is able to guarantee his own legitimacy. Why wait for a future Pope to declare this, when it is assumed there is a current one (John Paul II himself)?

"*If John Paul II is pope*" - observes Don Carandino in *Opportune, Importune* - "*there is no need to wait for the pronouncement of the Church of tomorrow. The 'Church' of today has already pronounced itself on the Council, on the New Mass and also on Archbishop Lefebvre himself, who is considered schismatic and excommunicated*" (n. 5 p. 2).

Fourth Consequence: the "prudential position" considers the question of knowing if there is, and who is actually the Pope, which is the proximate rule of Faith, to be a secondary question. This is equivalent, as we said, to effectively excluding all the teachings of the Church on the Pope, his authority, on the necessary submission to the Pope for salvation, of the deposit of Revelation and Tradition which it seeks to defend. The Pope will become - for those who adopt this prudential solution - a completely marginal element in the practice of one's Catholic faith.

Fifth Consequence: those who adopt the "prudential solution" - who do not pronounce definitively on the legitimacy of John Paul II - expose themselves to certain failure, no matter what position one decides to practice: therefore it is a highly imprudent position to take! If, in fact, John Paul II is Pope, one exposes oneself to schism by habitually resisting him and being excommunicated by him and separated from his communion. If, instead, John Paul II was not the Pope, naming him in the Canon of the Mass and hoping to receive canonical recognition from him, or even only the prospect of an accord, while doubting that he might not be the legitimate Pontiff is morally unacceptable and dangerous.

Sixth Consequence: the "prudential solution" strongly risks being a solution that will be proven false, as already happened in the history of the Society with regard to the question of the moral licitness of participating in the new mass.

Archbishop Lefebvre's biographer, Bishop Bernard Tissier de Mallerais [(6)], explains this case quite well in the small chapter entitled: "*A problem, the assistance at the New Mass*", and in succeeding chapters. One should note that since the 1970s, Father Guérard des Lauriers, Father Barbara and Father Vinson (all sedevacantists) publicly took positions against assistance at the New Mass (see *Sodalitium*, n. 50, p. 74). From Bishop Tissier we learn that even Bishop De Castro Mayer, in a letter to Archbishop Lefebvre of January 29, 1969, communicated to his confrere in the episcopate his conviction on the matter: "*One cannot participate at the new mass and even being present, one must have a grave reason. One cannot collaborate in the spread of a rite that, while not heretical, conducts one towards heresy. It is the rule that I give to my friends*" (p. 441). Bishop Tissier approves, rather, the "*prudence*" of Archbishop Lefebvre (which often consisted in changing his position). In 1969-1970, the founder of the Society claimed - prudently! - that a person not only can, but should, attend the new mass, and that it was even licit to celebrate it (see pp. 441-442); Archbishop Lefebvre's seminarians set the example, therefore, in his absence; "*we will go together to attend mass at the cistercian Abbey at Maigrauge where an older religious will celebrate the New Mass in latin*" (p. 441). Bishop Tissier defines this position as "*an attitude of prudent expectation*" (p. 442; on the other hand, it was only in 1971 that Archbishop Lefebvre definitively decided to reject the new mass; p. 487). In December 1972, in his seminarian conferences, he reiterated the necessity to possibly assist at the new mass to satisfy Sunday duty; Bishop Tissier comments: "*thus, the Archbishop distanced himself from Fathers Coache and Barbara who, on occasion of their 'marches on Rome' organized at Pentecost 1971 and 1973 made the pilgrims and the children swear an oath of allegiance to the Mass of Saint Pius V*" (p. 490). Still in 1973 he preached: "*search for a tridentine mass, or at least the consecration said in Latin*" (p. 478). But in a private letter of November 23, 1975 (this, then, after the suppression of the Society and the seminary as decreed by Paul VI), Bishop Lefebvre wrote that "*the new mass does not compel in order to fulfill one's Sunday obligation*" (p. 490). Then, "*In 1975, he will still allow 'occasional assistance' at the new mass, when it has been a long time since receiving communion. But in 1977 he was almost absolute: "conforming to the evolution that is gradually taking place in the spirits of priests, (...) we must avoid, I would say almost in a radical way, any assistance at the new mass"* (p. 491). "*Soon after,*" writes further Bishop Tissier, "*Archbishop Lefebvre no longer tolerates participation in a mass celebrated in the new rite...*" (p. 491). What the biographer doesn't say is that this "*soon after*" was given only in 1981, on the occasion of the division produced in Ecône over the thesis of Father Cantoni, then professor of the seminary (favorable to assisting at the new mass, supported in this by the director himself, Father Tissier) [(7)]. In

1982, each candidate to the priesthood at the Society will have to swear not to advise anyone to assist at the new mass, and in 1983 the Italian district will present - as Archbishop Lefebvre's position - the doctrine according to which one objectively commits a sin assisting at the new mass [8]. Summarizing: for the Society of Saint Pius X: from 1969 to 1975 it was obligatory to assist, in certain cases, at the new mass under penalty of sin. From 1975 to 1981, it was permissible both to assist and not to assist at the new mass. From 1981 on, it was illicit to assist, under penalty of sin. We see, then how the "prudential position" of Archbishop Lefebvre and of the Society of Saint Pius X on such an important moral question (the non-assistance at mass is a matter of grave sin) and doctrinal question (assistance at the new mass depends on doctrinal judgment made that on the liturgical reform) consisted in a continuous evolution where the point of arrival (at the moment) [9] is diametrically opposed to the point of departure, and espouses the position of those who came initially to be condemned as "imprudent" by Archbishop Lefebvre (Coache, Barbara, Vinson, Guérard des Lauriers, and the same Bishop de Castro Mayer). Behind these continuous changes of position, none are motivated by principle, but only taking into account "*the evolution that gradually occurs in the spirits of priests*": faith and morality, then, follow opinion... Doesn't the author of the Dossier see that the "prudential position" on assisting at the new mass is absolutely analogous to that of the legitimacy of John Paul II?

In conclusion: the "prudential solution" proposed by the TC is doctrinally unfounded, internally contradictory and highly imprudent. The one point on which we agree is that the Church hierarchy (cardinals, residential bishops, a future Council or a future Pope) must pronounce with authority on the question of the legitimacy of Paul VI and John Paul II. In the meantime, however, the problem cannot be left unsolved, because the faithful must know right now if the current occupant of the Apostolic See is - yes or no - the Vicar of Christ to whom it is their duty to be submissive (not only in words) in order to achieve eternal salvation.

Part III: THE TC'S "PRESENTATION OF THE HISTORICAL-THEMED ESSAY". THE GAPS AND HISTORICAL ERRORS THAT RENDER FLEETING ALL THE DEDUCTIONS THAT THE DOSSIER PURPOSES TO MAKE FROM A HISTORICAL POINT OF VIEW

"*We intend to undertake our analysis of sedevacantism*" the TC writes "*with an historical presentation of the topic, as simple as possible, to allow the reader to grasp the underlying problem in its concreteness and immediacy...*" (p. 7) [10]. I will follow the Author in his purpose. The brief history of "sedevacantism" (pp. 7-8) has a well defined purpose: to demonstrate that the "sedevacantist" thesis was late (an "*embryonic and incomplete positional stance*" in Mexico 1973, followed in a clearer and more structured way in France in 1976) (see p. 8). From this historical fact, the Author means to deduce two conclusions. The first is that sedevacantism is doctrinally false since it would be impossible, due to the indefectibility of the Church, that during the period from 1965 to 1973-76 no one noticed that the See was vacant (see pp. 28-34, 40-41, 50-60). The second, of a practical nature, is that sedevacantism was responsible for breaking that previous unity among Traditionalists around Archbishop Lefebvre: "*it would be beneficial,*" the Author concludes, "*for sedevacantism to have the courage to draw the ultimate consequence from the observation of this necessity* [11] *so that the Traditionalist world can rediscover the unity that began to be torn apart the day of the proclamation of the vacancy of the Apostolic See*" (p. 60).

I will demonstrate that - even just from a historical point of view - these conclusions

are... to use an expression used against me... "*simply false*" (see p. 29)

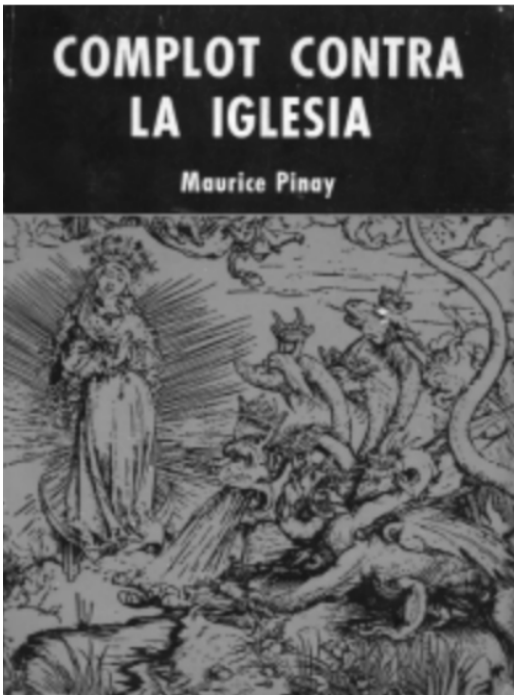
Sedevacantism was not late. It was even "preventive"! The sedevacantist positions on the question of the Pope from 1962 onward.

The Author of the special edition of the TC is young and has known nothing other than the Society; this perhaps explains his being unaware of the history of "traditionalism" in spite of his "*diligent research*" (see p. 29, note 7). As he himself asks us (ibidem), we will provide some information on the subject. We will demonstrate that sedevacantism existed in a certain sense even before 1965, and the question of the Pope was at the center of discussions among "traditionalists" (sedevacantist or not) from the beginning, while the "prudential solution" (consisting of disinterest in this question, considering it secondary if not idle and harmful) was specific to the Society of Saint Pius X alone.

The Mexican Catholics. Father Saenz y Arriaga [12] (1962/65)

In the previous section's subtitle I explained that sedevacantism was not only NOT late, but was even "preventive". I was making an illusion to the book *Plot against the Church*, published under a pseudonym by Maurice Pinay; its first edition, the one in Italian, was released in 1962 and distributed to all the Council Fathers in October the same year, after 14 months of work by the authors [13]. One could not ask for a date for the birth of sedevacantism - I would say - older or more public (in Rome, in the halls of Saint Peter). The book in question denounced the negotiations underway between Cardinal Bea (appointed by John XXIII) and the Jewish authorities (particularly B'nai B'rith) to obtain a declaration from the newly convened Council in favor of Judaism. This declaration would have obtained the aim of placing Vatican II in contradiction with the Gospel, the unanimous consensus of the Fathers, and nineteen centuries of the infallible magisterium of the Church. The Jews wanted "*the holy Church to contradict itself in this way, losing authority over the faithful, clearly proclaiming that an institution that contradicts itself cannot be divine*" (p. XIX). In the introduction to the Austrian edition (January 1963) we read: "*The audacity of communism, of Freemasonry, and of the Jews reaches such a point that there is already talk about controlling the election of the next Pope, hoping to put on the throne of Saint Peter one of their accomplices from the respectable body of Cardinals*" (p. 3). According to the authors, such a plan is not new: "*as we will demonstrate in this book, with documentation of irrefutable authenticity, the powers of the infernal Dragon came to place in the Pontificate a Cardinal manipulated by the forces of Satan, giving them the momentary feeling of being masters over the Holy Church. Our Lord Jesus Christ, who has never abandoned her, inspired action and equipped the arms of pious and combative men like Saint Bernard, Saint Norbert, Cardinal*

Cover of the book "Completo contro la Chiesa" published in 1962



Abbé Coache

Aimerico (...) who refused to recognize the qualifications of Cardinal Pierleoni as Pope, that wolf in sheep's clothing who tried for many years to usurp the throne of Saint Peter, by excommunicating him and relegating him an antipope, which he merited" (p. 4). And actually, the entirety of Chapter XXV (*A crypto-judaic Cardinal usurps the papacy*) is dedicated to the case of antipope Anacletus II Pierleoni. As can be seen, for the authors (lay people and ecclesiastics linked to the University of Guadalajara and the *Unione Cattolica Trento*) of the book *Complotto contro la Chiesa*, only an antipope like Pierleoni could have promulgated the document *Nostra aetate* that Cardinal Bea presented to the Council: this was Paul VI, elected in June 1963. After the book *Complotto contro la Chiesa* there was no shortage of other interventions on this topic during the Council [(14)]. Despite this, and despite the opposition of the conciliar minority led by Monsignor Carli, Bishop of Segni (and assisted by the Arab Bishops), and despite numerous incidents along the way that led to the idea of setting aside the schema, came the eve of the definitive vote on *Nostra aetate*.

Catholics who opposed the Council and *Nostra aetate* made one last attempt to try to block the path to the Declaration. Henri Fesquet, correspondent for the newspaper *Le Monde*, wrote in his article of October 16, 1965: "*Above all, we must mention the four-page booklet that the bishops received. It was preceded by this long and curious title: 'No council, nor any pope, can condemn Jesus, the Catholic, Apostolic and Roman Church, its Popes and its most illustrious Councils. Now, the declaration on the Jews implicitly carries such a condemnation and for this reason it must be rejected'. In the text, we read these impressive statements: 'The Jews now wish to push the Church to tacitly condemn itself and discredit itself before the whole world.* ***It is evident that only an antipope and a council could approve a declaration of this kind. And this is what an ever-increasing number of Catholics throughout the world think with us, who are determined to act in the way now necessary to save the Church from such ignominy'*** *(...)*" [(15)]. The historians of *La Tradizione Cattolica* must therefore admit that sedevacantism did not see its birth in 1973/1976, but took a public position, addressing it to all the Council Fathers, in 1962 to 1965, that is, from the very start of Vatican Council II. They must also admit that these Catholics condemned the declaration *Nostra aetate*, while Archbishop Lefebvre (who had also asked for its rejection along with Bishop Carli and Bishop Proença Sigaud in a letter to the Conciliar Fathers distributed in the hall on October 11) [(16)] was not - according to his own statement [(17)] - among the 88 Fathers who voted against the Conciliar document on the 28th of October, 1965 [(18)]. These facts alone completely ruin the entire thesis of *La Tradizione Cattolica* founded on the late character of sedevacantism. For completeness, I will add other testimonies on the existence of sedevacantism before 1973/1976, the date given for the birth of this position according to the diligent historians of *La Tradizione Cattolica*.

Father Guérard des Laurier, Abbé Coache (1969)

It is well-known that "Traditionalism" came out into the open with the promulgation of the New Mass in 1969. We can demonstrate that by this date, the principal defenders of the Catholic mass in France were "sedevacantists". In fact, Abbé de Nantes narrates (in his own way) about the meeting held at the Maison Saint-Joseph in Saint-Parres-les-Vaudes on July 21, 1969 (before the promulgation of the New Mass, which happened in November of the same year). At Abbé de Nantes' house came Abbé Philippe Rousseau, the Mexican Fathers Saenz y Arringa [19] and Charles Marquette, Abbé Coache and Father Guérard des Lauriers, plus a layman from Versaille (Alain Tilloy); Father Barbara was already the guest of Abbé de Nantes, irrespective of the group visiting him. According to the testimony of Abbé de Nantes and his religious, the priests who came to visit him supported the invalidity of the New Mass and the vacancy of the Apostolic See. Confirmation of this testimony is found in a letter by Father Guérard des Lauriers dated the following August 8 to Abbé de Nantes in which he refers to the visit on the 21st of July and claims it is demonstrated - by the approval of the New Missal - that "Cardinal Montini" is not the pope [20].

Abbé de Nantes in Rome in 1973, showing to journalists his "Liber accusationis" against Paul VI

Argentina, The United States and Germany... (1967/69)

The influence of Abbé de Nantes (which then was enormous due to his opposition to Vatican II from the very beginning) caused hesitation in people like Father Barbara, or, in Argentina, Professor Disandro who however had already raised the question of Sede Vacante as early as 1969 [21]. In the United States there was no shortage of sedevacantists since at least 1967 if not earlier as testified in a letter by Doctor Kellner to Cardinal Browne on the 28th of April of that year [22]. And also in Germany, where in 1966 the *'Una Voce'-Gruppe* Maria was founded; dating from 1969, Professor Reinhard Lauth of the University of Munich declared the Apostolic See vacant [23]. The thesis of the TC, therefore, (that no trace of sedevacantism is found prior to 1973/1976) is proven - even universally - to be false.

Different positions

It is worth finally examining two other positions - though not necessarily sedevacantist - which have nothing to do with the "prudential position" of Archbishop Lefebvre. During Vatican Council II, in addition to the Mexicans of which we have

Bishop de Castro Mayer
(in the photo being received at a Ecône by Archbishop Lefebvre)

already spoken, the French of Abbé de Nantes stood out, and the Brazilians united around the Bishops of Campos (de Castro Mayer) and Diamantina (Proença Sigaud who later fully accepted the reforms). In an appended section I will quote the position of the most important French magazine directed by lay Catholics, *Itinéraires*. What was their position on the question?

Abbé de Nantes

Abbé de Nantes, former pastor at Villemaur, in his *Lettres à mes amis*, refused the Conciliar documents from the very beginning, so that, since 1969, he was considered the de facto reference point of "traditionalism" [(24)]. In December, 1967 (CRC, n. 3) Abbé de Nantes studied the case of a heretic pope in depth, following the opinion of Cardinal Journet. The faithful could not contest the validity of the election of Paul VI due to the peaceful acceptance by the universal Church (this is the argument of the TC) [(25)]. Embracing the thesis of Cardinal Journet (the heretic Pope is not deposed ipso facto, but must be declared as such by the Church), Abbé de Nantes noted that Paul VI, apostate, heretic, scandalous and schismatic, had to be declared deposed by the Roman Clergy (the Cardinals). "*It is their duty* [those who recognize the errors of Paul VI] *to bring this accusation before the Church. First, by giving warning to the Pope himself, then by appealing (...) to the infallible magisterium of this Pope* [(26)] *or, failing that, to the Council. Formally, it falls to the Clergy of Rome, and principally the Cardinal Bishops, the suffragans of the Bishop of Rome, the task of carrying out such a perilous but urgent mission for the salvation of the Church.*" "*Such an action,*" he wrote, "*has preeminence over any other cure and constitutes the highest charity, since the Fish (ICTUS) rots from the head if the supreme Function is not taken away from a man who is already dead.*" [(27)] From this perspective, he saw in the letter of approbation by Cardinals Ottaviani and Bacci of the *Brief Critical Examination of the Novus Ordo Missae* (1969) as the start of the canonical process of Paul VI. With this aim, on April 10, 1973, he sent to Paul VI a *Liber accusationis*, in which Giovanni Battista Montini was accused of apostasy, heresy and schism. In this context, he asked the Bishops (and especially, although without naming him, Archbishop Lefebvre) to break communion with Paul VI. "*There remains, then, the last remedy, heroic, the only one that is feared by the one who knowingly and pertinaciously inverted the sense of his divine and Apostolic mission. It is necessary that a Bishop, also a successor of the Apostles, a member of the teaching Church, of the College of Bishops of Rome, and ordained to the common good of the Church, breaks communion with him, until he has given proof of his fidelity to the office of the Supreme Pontificate.*" [(28)] "*It is evident that Abbé Georges de Nantes hoped that Archbishop Lefebvre would declare as soon as possible his withdrawal of obedience to Paul VI, breaking communion with him, according to the ancient formula of a Saint Basil* [already quoted in 1965] *or of a Saint Columban*" [(29)]. The proposal worried Paul VI. Already in 1969 the

Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith had asked that Abbé de Nantes "*disavow the accusation of heresy brought against Pope Paul VI and its aberrant conclusion (...) about the opportunity of his deposition on the part of the Cardinals*" (the formula of retraction); faced with his refusal, it merely notified him that he was "*banned, along with all his writings and activities*" (Notification of August 9, 1969) [30]. After Archbishop Lefebvre's declaration of November, 1974, he was called to Rome by the Cardinalate Commission instituted by Paul VI. In their interrogation in March 1975, Cardinals Garrone and Tabera manifested their concern that Archbishop Lefebvre might listen to Abbé de Nantes' appeal. Not only did Archbishop Lefebvre NOT do it (he even wrote to the French priest on March 19, 1975 "*if a bishop breaks with Rome, [that bishop] will not be me*"), but he disavowed his own manifesto to the Cardinals ("*I wrote those things in a moment of indignation*") [31]. In vain. The Society was also suppressed (May 6, 1975). Archbishop Lefebvre will also break with "Rome", but for disciplinary reasons...

Bishop de Castro Mayer

The Bishop of Campos, still linked at that time to the Brazilian Society, *Tradition, Family and Property*, sent Paul VI a study by Arnaldo Xavier Vidigal da Silveira, a founding member of the TFP, on Paul VI's New Mass and the theoretical hypothesis of a heretical Pope [32]. The connection between the two themes was evident. The author, who unlike Cardinal Journet leaned toward the thesis according to which the heretical Pope is by that very fact deposed (he considered it certain), invited to make new studies on the topic in order to find an agreement among theologians, agreement that would have allowed this conclusion to be applied with certainty in practice (p. 281; cf. pp. 214-216) [33]. The position of Vidigal da Silveira and Monsignor de Castro Mayer was not yet openly "sedevacantist"; however, they warned against failing to consider it: "*suppose that someone takes for certain, without any further problem, the opinion*" according to which a heretical Pope is still Pope until he is deposed: "*he should, logically, accept any new solemn definition that a heretical Pope would make before the proclamation of the declaration of heresy. Such an acceptance would be inconsiderate, since, according to what very important authors maintain, such a pope could already have lost the pontificate, and therefore could define a false proposition as dogma*" (p. 215). Accordingly, Bishop de Castro Mayer never marginalized sedevacantists (as opposed to Archbishop Lefebvre), joined the initiative of the "Guérardians" in the *Letter to some Bishops* (of January 1983), and even supported at Ecône, before the Episcopal consecrations, the vacancy of the See (regardless of the "*peaceful acceptance of the Church*"). If he didn't give greater publicity and follow up to his convinced sedevacantist position, it was due to the desire not to compromise his relationship with Archbishop Lefebvre, as this latter had the occasion to declare: "*If not for me, Bishop de Castro Mayer would be a sedevacantist. He abstained from sedevacantism, so as not to disturb us*" (Bishop Williamson, "pastoral letter": *Campos - What went wrong?* June 2002). The consequence of all this was his agreement with the modernists as stipulated by Bishops Rangel and Rifan...

Itinéraires

The magazine *Itinéraires* (directed by Jean Madiran) was the most prestigious French magazine that had taken a position against the new catechism and against the New Mass. Even though it supported a position more moderate than, for example, that of Father Guérard des Lauriers (who was, however, a collaborator on the magazine), it did not hesitate, once the new missal was promulgated, to expose to its readers the question of a "heretical pope" and the various

positions of theologians on the loss of the pontificate in this eventuality [34]. The problem was at least publicly posed.

Public action by "Traditionalists" generally arose without the overt support of Archbishop Lefebvre. Sedevacantism could not have caused the break of initial unity within the Society of Saint Pius X

"*It would be desirable,*" concludes the TC, "*that sedevacantism would have the humility and courage to draw the fundamental conclusions from the observation of this need, so that the traditionalist world could rediscover that initial unity torn apart the day of the proclamation of the vacancy of the Apostolic See*" (p. 60). But is it really true that the "initial unity" was built around Archbishop Lefebvre and the Society of Saint Pius X? (see p. 8). And is it true that the fault for the tearing apart of this "initial unity" is to be attributed to sedevacantists? We can calmly respond "no"' to both questions. Archbishop Lefebvre's role, already during the Council where he was president of *Coetus internationalis Patrum*, is irrefutable and recognized by all; we can never be grateful enough for everything he did for the Church. However, let us clarify without fear of contradiction, that from the close of the Council until the declaration of November 21, 1974, and even to the end of 1975, Archbishop Lefebvre always wanted, in public, to distinguish his person and his work from that of the "traditionalists". Publicly, he did not support early opposers at the Council nor early opposers to the New Mass.

Archbishop Lefebvre and the Council (1964-1969)

From 1965 to 1969, "Traditionalism" was busy rejecting Vatican II; in France, the name Abbé de Nantes stands out. What was Archbishop Lefebvre's position? We ask his biographer, Bishop Tissier de Mallerais. Archbishop Lefebvre voted 'placet' to all the conciliar documents except two (*Gaudium et spes; Dignitatis humanae*); and even these two documents - despite Archbishop Lefebvre's statements to the contrary [35] - were signed and promulgated by him along with Paul VI (pp. 332-334): "*Once that a schema is promulgated by the pope,*" explained Bishop Tissier to justify this acceptance of Vatican II, "*it was no longer a schema, but an act of the magisterium, so its nature changes*" (p. 333). In 1968 (at a conference reported in *A Bishop speaks*) Archbishop Lefebvre said: "*The texts of the Council, and particularly that of Gaudium et spes, the one on religious liberty, were signed by the pope and the bishops, therefore we cannot doubt its contents*" (p. 399). In the same year - in an interview with *Itinéraires* - the Archbishop declared himself an optimist thanks to Paul VI (p. 402). "*No leader of Catholic resistance in France or elsewhere,*" commented Tissier, "*manifested the least desire to put into doubt the Conciliar decisions; neither Archbishop Lefebvre in his comments, nor the eminent laity like Jean Madiran (...), Jean Ousset (...) or Marcel Clement*" (p. 403); evidently Abbé de Nantes, who was tried in 1968, and Father Saenz are unknown (!) to the biographer... In a word, all of Archbishop Lefebvre's activity between 1965 and 1969 took place in the setting of acceptance of Vatican II, when, instead, open criticism to the Council already existed [36].

Archbishop Lefebvre after the "promulgation" of the new missal (1969-1974-75)

In 1969, with the promulgation of the New Missal, the so-called "Traditionalist" movement developed. There was no doubt of the fact that - behind the scenes - Archbishop Lefebvre was always present to support and encourage all those opposed to the Novus Ordo Missae (N.O.M.). However, Archbishop Lefebvre (who in 1969 had opened his seminary and in November received approval for the Society of Saint Pius X by the Bishop

Archbishop Lefevbre on May 5, 1988 while signing The "Protocol of Understanding". Behind him are recognized Abbé be laroche and Abbé Tissier de Mallerais, negotiators for the FSSPX

of Fribourg) took no public position, until he was forced to come out into the open following the apostolic visit to the seminary at Ecône (1974) and their successive sanctions (1975-1976). There is no dispute about what Alexandre Monscriff wrote in the French magazine, *Fideliter*, about the Society of Saint Pius X on the occasion of the death of Abbé Coache: "*The Society of Saint Pius X was founded by Archbishop Lefebvre only in November 1970 and was then concerned with training his first seminarians: he was quite far from having achieved the development he experienced especially after 1976. An unedited letter from Archbishop Lefebvre to Abbé Coache, dated February 25, 1972, shows how Archbishop Lefebvre, taken up by the difficulties in forming his Society, was still isolated: 'Reverend (...) Please understand that for the survival of the work that I am pursuing, God knows in what a maze of difficulties!, I cannot do anything public and solemn in a diocese without having the placet of the Bishop (...). There are already complaints against the seminary. I am succeeding in demonstrating their falsehood and slowly becoming rooted and progressing. But if I put myself canonically in the wrong, all doors will be closed to new foundations, for new incardinations. This applies to me, due to the survival and progress of my work, but it doesn't necessarily apply to you (...). You will find me too prudent. But it is the affection I bring to these young clerics that brings me to do it. I must extend myself and obtain the Pontifical Right* [meaning that the Society would not only be recognized by the Bishop - the diocesan right - but also by the Holy See - the pontifical right; ed.]." [(37)]

This explains all the silences, all the absences of Archbishop Lefebvre and of his Society up until 1974. It explains the "prudential" attitude on assisting at the New Mass, about which we have already spoken. It explains the fact that, contrary to Cardinals Ottaviani and Bacci, he did not sign the *Brief Examination of the Novus Ordo Missae* [(38)]. It explains the fact that - despite the heartfelt appeal of Jean Madiran in his magazine *Itinéraires* [(39)], and the example of other priests [(40)] - he refused to take a public stance against the New Mass [(41)]. It explains the fact that neither he nor the Society participated in the March on Rome on Pentecost in 1970 (1,500 people), 1971 (5,000 people), and 1973 (22 countries, 700 pilgrims from France alone) organized by Abbé Coache with Father Barbara, Father Saenz, Elisabeth Gerstner and Franco Antico, and on the contrary, he decreed its death in 1975 [(42)]. It explains the fact that in 1968-72 he did not support the processions on Corpus Christi to Montjavoult (Abbé Coache's parish), the annual meeting of all French "Traditionalists", which will reach 5,000 participants, or again in 1973, the initiative, again by Abbé Coache, to found a minor seminary at Flavigny [(43)] (and even in 1977 the seizure of Saint-Nicolas-du-Chardonnet in Paris was not only NOT the work of the Society, but was even publicly condemned by the seminary's director in Ecône!). Bishop Tissier, in his biography of Archbishop Lefebvre (p. 523) fixed the end of 1975 as the date in which the traditionalist Archbishop questioned the

Council and Paul VI ("*Up until 1975, Archbishop Lefebvre took care not to attack the council or the pope. On the 30th of May, 1975, in a conference he declared to the seminarians: 'Above all, don't ever say that the Archbishop is against the pope or the council, it isn't true!'*") We could multiply the examples, but what is written here is sufficient to debunk the historical pretext by the TC. The public resistance to the new missal, as to the Council, grew without Archbishop Lefebvre; among the earliest of them are found the names of priests who were, or who became, sedevacantists (of various currents): Father Guérard, Father Barbara, Abbé Coache, and Father Saenz. The sedevacantists were not the cause of division in a preexisting movement, but rather they contributed to its founding!

Archbishop Lefebvre and the Sedevacantists. Who caused the break, and why (1977-1979)

Despite this, the TC maintains that it was the sedevacantists who divided the opposition movement to the Council and its liturgical reform. The history shows that - in reality - the decision that resulted in this division is to be attributed to the Society of Saint Pius X, and not to the sedevacantists.

The latter, in fact, despite their very different position from that of Archbishop Lefebvre, always remained at his side: up until 1974, so that he could take a public stand on the Mass and the Council, and from 1974 to 1977, so that he could take a position on the pope.

In fact, on the 6th of May, 1975 the Bishop of Lausanne-Geneva-Fribourg, Bishop Mamie, with the agreement of Paul VI, canonically suppressed the Society of Saint Pius X [(44)]. Even though on June 22, 1976, Archbishop Lefebvre declared himself "*in full communion of thought and faith*" with Paul VI [(45)], after his ordinations of June 29, the suspension *a divinis* inflicted on him on July 22 of the same year pushed the French Archbishop to declare that the "*conciliar Church*" was a schismatic Church [(46)] and to hypothesize publicly in August the vacancy of the Apostolic See [(47)]. It is clear that - in these circumstances - sedevacantists could only be in the front row among the supporters of Archbishop Lefebvre, whose popularity "*skyrocketed*" in that period (Tissier, p. 515). Father Guérard, professor at Ecône, Father Barbara in his magazine *Forts dans la Foi*, even the Mexican sedevacantists [(48)], all supported Archbishop Lefebvre, to the point that the parish priest of the *Divina Provvidenza* in Acapulco, Father Carmona (who would later be consecrated in 1981 by Archbishop Thuc) was excommunicated by his bishop for having celebrated a Mass in support of Archbishop Lefebvre on December 8, 1976 [(49)].

The collaboration between sedevacantists and Archbishop Lefebvre's Society was compromised by his negotiations with Paul VI/John Paul II. Already at the Mass in Lille on August 29, 1976, where Archbishop Lefebvre himself had harsh words toward the reformers (*bastard priests, bastard mass*), he called for an audience with Paul VI in order to have "*the experience of tradition*" (Tissier, pp. 517-518). The audience was granted on September 11, 1976, and the following May Cardinal Seper, by order of Paul VI, began dialogues with the traditionalist Archbishop. In that period (February, 1977) [(51)] his position on the pope was the one later published in the book *Satan's Master Stroke*: the vacant See was a possible hypothesis, but the preferred position was that Paul VI was legitimate, but liberal [(50)]. And it was in that same year, 1977 [(52)], that the two principal French supporters of sedevacantism came to be discreetly removed from Ecône: Father Barbara, whose magazine, *Forts dans la Foi*, will be banned from seminary after the publication of n. 51 in November 1977, and Father Guérard des Lauriers, who was no longer invited to give his lectures at Ecône after having preached its spiritual exercises of September 1977. Despite this, both Father Barbara in his magazine and Father Guérard continued to support

Archbishop Lefebvre (Father Guérard even sent his young Dominicans to Ecône in 1978, see Tissier, p. 549). The definitive break happened after the death of Paul VI (August 6, 1978) and the audience accorded to Archbishop Lefebvre by John Paul II (November 18, 1978) where the formula "*the Council in the light of Tradition*" (J.P.II, November 6, 1978) seemed to have become the lowest common denominator. Archbishop Lefebvre thus wrote a letter to John Paul II on December 24, 1978, made public in *Letter to my friends and benefactors* n. 16 (March 19, 1979) in which he asked for freedom for the traditional Mass: "*The Bishops would decide on the places, and the hours reserved for this Tradition. Unity would immediately gather around the Bishop of the place*". It was then that Father Guérard des Lauriers, being the first, publicly condemned the agreement proposed by Archbishop Lefebvre ("*Monseigneur, nous ne voulons pas de cette paix*")['*Monsignor, we do not want this peace*']. It is in this context that Archbishop Lefebvre will make the decision to break with the sedevacantists with his declaration of November 8, 1979 ("*Position of Archbishop Lefebvre on the New Mass*") published in the magazine *Cor unum* (no. 4, November, 1979) [(53)] and spread among the faithful by the magazine *Fideliter*, which both came to omit, however, the last paragraph: "*Consequently, the Priestly Society of Saint Pius X, its brothers, its sisters, its oblates, cannot tolerate within its ranks members who do not pray for the Pope* [as such, ed.] *and who affirm that all the Masses of the Novus Ordo are invalid*" (*Cor unum*, n. 4, p. 8).

Only after this public declaration did Father Barbara (*Forts dans la Foi*, n. 1, new series, first trimester 1980) and the other sedevacantists disassociate themselves publicly from Archbishop Lefebvre. There followed the expulsion or exiting from the Society, of the priests who adhered to the Thesis of Father Guérard or Father Barbara: Lucien and Seuillot in 1979 (Thesis of Cassiciacum), Guépin and Belmont in 1980 (Thesis of Cassiciacum), Barthe in 1981 (sedevacantism) Egrégyi in 1981 (sedevacantism), 12 American priests in 1983, four Italians in 1985 (Cassiciacum), 2 South Americans, and 21 seminarians in 1989, etc. A letter from Archbishop Lefebvre to John Paul II of March 8, 1980 summarized clearly the reasons that pushed Archbishop Lefebfre to make this break with the sedevacantists:

"*Holy Father,*

To put an end to the doubts that are now spreading (...) concerning my attitude and my way of thinking with respect to the Pope, the Council, and the Novus Ordo Mass, and fearing lest these rumors should reach Your Holiness, I take the liberty of reaffirming my consistent position.

1) I have no hesitation [(54)] *on the legitimacy and validity of your election, and consequently I cannot tolerate there not being addressed to God the prayers prescribed by the Holy Church for Your Holiness. I have already had to repress these ideas, and continue to do so, with regard to some seminarians and priests who have allowed themselves to be influenced by certain clerics outside the Society.*

2) I am in full agreement with the judgment that Your Holiness gave on the Second Vatican Council, on 6 November 1978, at a meeting of the Sacred College: "that the Council must be understood in the light of the whole of holy Tradition, and on the basis of the constant Magisterium of Holy Mother Church."

3) As for the Novus Ordo Mass, despite all the reservations which must be made about it, I have never affirmed that it is in itself invalid or heretical.

I will thank God and Your Holiness if these clear declarations could hasten the free use of the traditional liturgy, and the recognition of the Society of St. Pius X by the Church, and likewise of all those who, by signing these declarations, have endeavored to save the Church by perpetuating its Tradition. May Your Holiness deign to accept my

profound and filial respect in Christ and Mary."

From what has been said up to this point, it is clear that it was not the sedevacantists who broke with Archbishop Lefebvre, but it was he who sacrificed them, with the aim of carrying forward the negotiations with John Paul II in order to obtain the recognition of the Society. Therefore, the version of facts given by *La Tradizione cattolica* is false, and is likely to mislead their readers who did not personally experience the events narrated here.

Part IV: AN ANALYSIS OF THE THEOLOGICAL OBJECTIONS OPPOSED TO SEDEVACANTISM BY *LA TRADIZIONE CATTOLICA*: THAT THEY SUMMARIZE IN THE INDEFECTIBILITY OF THE CHURCH. SODALITIUM RESPONDS TO EACH OF THEM AND SHOWS HOW INSTEAD, IT IS THE POSITIONS OF THE SOCIETY AND THOSE OF MODERNISTS WHO - IN DIFFERENT WAYS - OPPOSE SUCH INDEFECTIBILITY

From the very beginning, the TC - following in the footsteps of Father Piero Cantoni [(55)] - substantially objects to any sedevacantism, as being against the indefectibility of the Church: "*The visibility of the Church and its continuity over time (indefectibility), was and remains at stake as constitutive and indispensable elements to the very existence of the Catholic Church*" (p. 9). Before examining the individual objections, it is necessary to clarify the notion of the indefectibility of the Church, first in itself, and then in the current situation of the Church.

The Indefectibility of the Church

The *Enciclopedia Cattolica* defines indefectibility thus: "*A supernatural property of the true Church, by which it will remain, until the end of the world, just as Jesus Christ instituted it. Such a concept includes: a) the perpetual or perennial duration of the Church; b) its perseverance in that which constitutes its essence, that is, in its constitution and in its specific properties. It follows that due to its indefectibility, the Church will remain always identical to herself, and will never lose any of her marks. Thus understood, indefectibility encompasses all the other properties of the Church: its hierarchical and monarchical constitution, infallibility, and visibility.*" [(56)]

The article continues thus: "*that the Church is indefectible is a truth of the Catholic Faith, clearly contained in Sacred Scripture* [cited in Mt. XVI:18, Mt XXVII:20, Jn. XIV:16] *and is taught by the ordinary magisterium. It has not yet been directly defined by the solemn magisterium, but the Vatican Council* [First] *had prepared a schema of definition in the following canons* [the first being against "pessimists", according to whom the Church would be corrupted; the second against the "optimists" for whom the Church will be replaced by a new, better reality ed.]*: 1) 'Si quis dixerit eamdem Christi Ecclesiam posse offundi tenebris aut infici malis, quibus a salutari fidei morumque veritate aberret, ab originali sua institutione deviet, aut depravata et corrupta tandem desinat esse, anathema sit'; 2) 'Si quis dixerit praesentem Dei Ecclesiam non esse ultimam ac supremam consequendae salutis oeconomiam, sed expectandam esse aliam per novam et pleniorem divini Spiritus effusionem, anathema sit'*" (Article "Indefectibility of the Church", Vol. VI, columns 1792-1794). ['*If anyone says that the same Church of Christ can be filled with darkness or be infected by evils, by which it would turn away from the salutary truth of faith and morals, deviate from its original institution, or finally cease so that it becomes perverted and corrupted, let him be anathema'; 2) 'If anyone says that the present Church of God is not the ultimate and supreme economy for achieving salvation, but that another is to be expected through a new and more complete outpouring of the divine Spirit, let him be*

anathema.' tr.]. The ordinary magisterium expressed itself in the decree *Lamentabili* (n. 53) [which condemned the Thesis: "*That the organic constitution of the Church is not immutable; but Christian society, no different from human society, is subject to continual evolution*"]; and in the Bull *Auctorem Fidei* which condemned as heretical this proposition by the Jansenist Synod of Pistoia: "*in recent centuries there has spread [in the Church] a general obfuscation of truths of the greatest importance regarding religion, and which are the basis of faith and the moral doctrine of Jesus Christ*" (Denz. 1501; Denz.-Sch. 2601: the obfuscation of the Truth in the Church). [Both the Society of Saint Pius X and the followers of Vatican II maintain in a certain sense that the truth of the Church has been obscured: for some in the present, for others in the past] [(57)].

The Church is endowed with a single hierarchy distinguished for two reasons: that of order, and that of jurisdiction (can. 108§3). The Church being perennial and indefectible (DS 2997: "*always stable and steadfast until the end of time*"), so will the power of orders (aimed at the sanctification of souls) and jurisdiction (which includes the *potestas regiminis* - the government of the Church which assures the infallible teaching of revealed truth).

The perennity of the Church (government and magisterium) is founded on Roman primacy [(58)], which too is perennial: "*The eternal Shepherd and guardian of our souls, to perpetuate His salutary work of redemption, decided to build the Holy Church (...) so that the episcopate itself was one and undivided, and so that the multitude of all believers were preserved in the unity of faith and communion (...) placed Blessed Peter before the other Apostles, and established in his person the* ***perpetual*** *principle and visible foundation of this dual unity. And since the gates of hell, growing with hatred each day, rise up from all sides against this foundation established by God to overthrow the Church if possible (...) we believe it necessary (...) to propose to all the faithful (...) the doctrine that they must believe and maintain on this institution, the* ***perpetuity*** *and the nature of the sacred Apostolic Primacy, on which rests the strength and solidity of the entire Church.*" (Vatican I, *Pastor aeternus*, D 1821, DS 3050-3052).

"*...If anyone should say, therefore, that it is not by the institution of Christ Our Lord himself, or by divine right, that Blessed Peter should always have perpetual successors in the primacy over the universal Church (...) let him be anathema*" (*ibidem*, Chapter 2, canon, DS 3058, see also DS 3056-3057).

If the Primacy of Peter is perennial and indefectible, such also is its infallible magisterium: "*Therefore this charism of the Truth of the faith,* ***never defectible****, was granted by God to Peter and to the successors of his See, so as to exercise this highest office for the salvation of all, so that through them, the universal flock of Christ might be turned away from the poisonous food of error, and were nourished by the fodder of heavenly doctrine so that, removed from all occasion of schism, the whole Church would conserve its unity and, resting on its foundations, stand unwavering against the gates of hell*" (ibidem, DS 3071).

This doctrine is fully embraced and believed by all members of the Istituto *Mater Boni Consilii*, and by all those who follow the *Thesis of Cassiciacum*.

Indefectibility in the current situation of the Church. The position of the "traditionalists" in general, and of the Society of Saint Pius X in particular, on the power of jurisdiction and magisterium in the current situation.

We have seen how the Church is indefectible: not only can it never disappear, but it also cannot fail in its mission. Indefectibility, in fact, has been granted to it not only to last materially, de facto, (as can also happen to a false religion, a heretical sect, a purely human structure) but so as to "*apply to all human generations, the fruits (...) of*

redemption" (DS 2997), and "*to perpetuate the salvific work of redemption*" (DS 3050). She therefore cannot (because she is divinely assisted) give poison to her children (Vatican I, DS 3070-3071), neither in that which regards the power to sanctify souls through the sacraments, nor in that which regards the governance of the Church and her teaching.

Now, for all the so-called "traditionalists", a serious difficulty presents itself in this matter. In fact, they are not limited to condemning abuses: "*the criticisms of the "traditionalists" are not principally concerned with abuses committed by the members of the teaching Church* [priests, faithful], *nor with the deviations made by the more or less extended parts of the Episcopate. They are concerned above all and essentially in the errors and deviations contained in the Council itself, and then in its subsequent official reforms (especially in matters of liturgy and sacraments), as well as in the writings of Paul VI and John Paul II whose goal was to apply the Council. We have shown on another occasion (Cahiers de Cassiciacum, n. 5, pp. 61-72) that those same main tendencies labeled as 'traditionalist', actually formulate this criticism. The fact that Archbishop de Castro Mayer signed the 'Lettre à qualques Évêques...' and subsequently the text jointly signed by Archbishop Lefebvre and Archbishop de Castro Mayer (Fideliter, n. 36, Nov.-Dec. 1983) confirms that this is precisely at the heart of the 'traditionalist' battle.*" [(59)] If this is the case, what is the grave difficulty I was speaking about? Let's give the word to Abbé Lucien again: "*If (...) it is affirmed that this 'hierarchy' is formally the Catholic Hierarchy, we fall into the second of the 'great and fatal errors' enunciated by Pope Leo XIII in this regard* [i.e. regarding indefectibility]: *'from which it follows that they are in great and fatal error who form in their minds a desire for an almost hidden and invisible Church; as well as those who consider it a human institution, with a certain organization, a discipline, and external rites;* ***but without a perennial communication of gifts and Divine grace, and without those things which by their daily and habitual manifestation attest that one's supernatural life comes from God****' (Satis cognitum, Insegnamenti Pontifici, La Chiesa, n. 543)*" [(60)]. Now, what is the position of the Society of Saint Pius X on Vatican II, the post-conciliar teaching and the current hierarchy? [(61)] As to the power of the magisterium, the Society of Saint Pius X rejects the teaching of the Council and the post Conciliar Popes, indeed the TC supposes that it is even probable that it does not exist as such [(62)]. As to the power of jurisdiction, the Society of Saint Pius X refuses obedience to authorities that are declared legitimate. As to the power of legislation, the Society rejects the new Code of Canon Law. As to the power of sanctification, the Society refuses Sacraments administered by the new rites, and instructs their faithful to abstain from these celebrations.

It follows that the recognition of John Paul II is more nominal than real; the existence of a hierarchy, of a magisterium, of jurisdiction is admitted: but this hierarchy, this magisterium, this jurisdiction, these external rites are declared devoid of "*that perennial communication of gifts and Divine grace, and without those things which by their daily and habitual manifestation attest that one's supernatural life comes from God*". Neither the Conciliar magisterium, nor the current discipline, nor the renewed liturgy of the mass and sacraments are valued as coming from God...

The TC should therefore understand that we do not intend so much to defend Father Guérard's personal opinions against Archbishop Lefebvre or the Society. Our intent is the other way around. *Sodalitium* supports the criticism of Vatican II by Archbishop Lefebvre (and others), and seeks precisely to demonstrate that this criticism does not imply an attack on the indefectibility and perennity of the Church which is an article of our faith, while the TC's precise position might lead one to believe just that. By defending the Thesis of Cassiciacum, we are

convinced that we are also defending the essence of Archbishop Lefebvre, that is, the rejection of Vatican II and the new Mass in the name of Catholic orthodoxy, since the Thesis seems to us the best solution that theology can give to the problem of indefectibility of the Church after Vatican II.

Does the Thesis of Cassiciacum truly imply the end of the teaching Church (pp. 23-26) and the end of the power of jurisdiction (pp. 26-27)?

That is what the Dossier supports, on the pages cited above, repeating in this case as well what Father Cantoni wrote in his time [(63)]. Our response is already implicitly found in this article, in the chapter dedicated to the indefectibility of the Church; let's try to render it explicit.

The Church that we believe to be indefectible is the Church founded by Christ, therefore an essentially hierarchical Church. In the Church, by Divine institution, there is only one hierarchy, which is distinguished in terms of orders and jurisdiction. The hierarchy, by reason of orders, includes bishops, priests and inferior ministers; in matters of jurisdiction it entails the supreme Pontificate and the subordinate episcopate (see Can. 108). The Church will then be perennial both in power of orders as in power of jurisdiction and magisterium, *aliter et aliter*, however, in different ways.

As regards the perennity of orders, the current situation of the Church does not pose great difficulty: Divine Providence has made sure that the offering of the Divine Sacrifice and the administration of the Sacraments does not cease, despite the attempt at abolition carried out by the liturgical reform of Vatican II, and this not even in the Latin rite Church. Episcopal consecrations have assured the transmission of the Episcopate in the Church, as regards the power of orders, and the perennity of the priesthood for the glory of God and the salvation of souls [(64)].

The difficulty arises from the power to govern the Church and to teach with authority which depends on the power of jurisdiction, at the summit of which is Peter. If, in fact, we admit the vacancy of the See, where, the TC asks, is the teaching Church? Where is the Church hierarchy?

Sedevacantists generally respond that, upon the death of each Pope and before the valid election of his successor, without any specifics about the duration of this time, the Church is, precisely, lacking a Pope, lacking a visible head (headless, she is the widow of her shepherd): yet not ceasing to exist, and the promise of perpetuity for the Church as well as the Primacy, is not made in vain.

The TC does not accept this explanation: "*even in ordinary periods of sede vacante*," it writes regarding the power of the magisterium, "*that is, between the death of a pope and the election of his successor, this body remains - in the episcopate - as the teaching body (...). It would, in fact, be monstrous to think that the teaching Church dies with the pope, only to then rise again the day of the election of a new pontiff*" (p. 23). "*This authority,*" it likewise writes regarding jurisdiction, "*communicated to the Church is absolutely perennial: it was, it is, and it will be present all days until the end of time (including the moments understood between the death of a pope and the election of his successor, in which it continues to subsist in the episcopate)(...)*" (p. 26).

As the reader is well aware, the TC shifts the problem of the perennity and indefectibility of the papal primacy to that of the Episcopal hierarchy: the sedevacantist response then, which is founded on the possibility of the vacancy of the Apostolic See, is considered useless because in addition to the Pope, bishops too would be lacking in their duty to teach and govern. Father Cantoni said: it isn't the problem of the "heretical Pope" any more [admitted to and studied by all theologians], but of the "heretical Church" [Pope and bishops together!].

Without a doubt, residential bishops make up a part of the Church hierarchy and of the teaching Church. Without a doubt, the episcopate, as a Divine institution, is also perennial in the Church. I not only admit this, but I profess it publicly.

But the TC does not sufficiently consider how the episcopate is founded on the primacy, and the perennity of the episcopate on that of the primacy (Vatican I, D 1821, DS 3051-3052); we saw it previously. It seems to me that many consequences can be drawn from this truth.

First of all, if the perennity of succession in the primacy is only morally uninterrupted, the same thing should be said of the episcopate. Now, for the primacy, a moral continuity is sufficient, such that there can be an interruption of a more or less long vacancy of the See. Father Zapelena, S.J. of the Gregoriana University, speaking on the perennity of the Primacy of Peter (revealed by Christ, Mt XVI:18, and defined by the Church, D. 1825): "*It is a succession that must last continuously until the end of the ages.* ***Clearly, a moral continuity is sufficient****, which is not interrupted during the time in which a new successor is elected* [the sede vacante]" [(65)]. If this is true for the head, it is also true for the episcopal body.

This conclusion is confirmed by the consideration of the duties of residential Bishops which, for the TC, are uninterrupted and perennial in every instant in time in which the Church lives: jurisdiction and magisterium. Now, if papal jurisdiction and magisterium may not exist in act during vacancy of the See, all the more so can this happen to the jurisdiction and magisterium of the episcopate. In fact, the bishop governs only a particular portion of the Church, and not the universal Church, and derives all its jurisdiction from the Primal See, that is, the Pope, the source and principle of every ecclesiastical jurisdiction. The same, and more, can be said of the magisterium. The episcopal magisterium, not only that of a single bishop, but also that of all the bishops gathered together, is NOT infallible without the Pope; during the vacancy (more or less long) of the Roman See, therefore, an infallible magisterium in act that can guide the faithful with certainty, the learning Church, does NOT exist.

Without the Pope, the Church - founded on Peter (Mt XVI:18) - is truly acephalous (lacking a visible head), lacking infallible magisterium: the Church hierarchy as Christ had constituted it (which was monarchical, not episcopal) [(66)] is lacking in ongoing act, but not in potency; the existence of a subordinate episcopate does not substantially change things from this point of view: the Church - I remind the TC - is not collegial, but monarchical, founded on the primacy of Peter.

How then could the absolute absence of residential bishops or cardinals compromise the Church in its lasting indefectibility? Only in rendering impossible the election of a successor to the throne of Peter. "*During the vacancy of the Primal See*", continues Zapelena in the previously quoted passage, "***the right and duty (together with the Divine***

Father Guérard des Lauriers in a 1973 photo

promise) to elect someone to legitimately succeed the deceased Pope in the rights of primacy remains in the Church. *During all this time the ecclesiastical constitution does not change, as* ***the supreme power does not devolve to the college of bishops or cardinals****, but the divine law concerning the election of the successor remains*". Where, then, is the hierarchical Church, the teaching Church, as Christ intended it, founded on the primacy of Peter, during the vacancy of the Apostolic See? The axiom '*ubi Petrus ibi Ecclesia*' is always valid. Where Peter is, there is the Church. During the Sede Vacante, "*the Papacy, removed from the Pope, finds in the Church only a ministerial elective potential, such that it can, during the Sede Vacante, elect a Pope through its Cardinals, or in one case (accidental), through itself*" (Cajetan, *De comparatione auctoritate Papae et Concilii*, n. 210) [(67)]. During Sede Vacante, it is not so much the fallible magisterium of bishops or the reduced and local governance of bishops that maintains the Church of Christ: it is the fact of its having the elective potency for a new Pope, as Lucien recalled in quoting Frs. Goupil and Antoine [(68)].

Now the Thesis of Cassiciacum maintains precisely that, in the very particular vacancy of the Apostolic See in which we are living, there always remains a provision possible for the same See to have a new, legitimate Pope, both because the current occupant of the Apostolic See could recover his full legitimacy (this too written well before Father Guérard - in 1543!- by Cardinal Girolamo Albani) [(69)], and because the bishops and cardinals (even materialiter) can proceed to a valid and juridically legitimate papal election, thanks to the material succession in their sees [(70)], or, their authority regained, proceed to the ascertainment of formal heresy on the part of John Paul II and the election of a successor. Sedevacantism, then, at least in the *Thesis of Cassiciacum* [(71)], does not imply the denial of the indefectibility of the Church, since that it admits the existence of the papacy "*in the ministerial elective potency of the Church*".

In speaking about indefectibility, we must never forget that the Church can pass through, and is currently passing through, periods of exceptionally grave crises. The exemplary case is that of the Great Western Schism.

The reader who has followed us so far might still be perplexed, and might ask if the explanations given up to now effectively safeguard the indefectibility, apostolicity, and the visibility of the Church. The response is undoubtedly affirmative. The same reader however should never forget that the Church can pass through, as it is currently passing through [(72)], periods of exceptionally grave crises, symbolized in the Gospel by the storm that shook the Barque of Peter, while Our Lord appeared asleep (Mt. VIII: 25; Lk. Viii, 24). "...*Nonnumquam Ecclesia tantis gentilium pressuris non solum afflicta sed et fondata est ut, si fieri possit, Redemptor ipsius eam prorsus deseruisse ad tempus videretur*" wrote Saint Bede in this regard. ["*At times the Church found itself afflicted by so much pressure from the Gentiles that it felt as though, if it were possible, the Redeemer would have completely abandoned it for a time*" tr.]

One accurate study of the Great Western Schism shows us the similarity (certainly not identical - history never repeats itself) between that crisis and the current one, particularly as regards the visibility, apostolicity and indefectibility of the Church. As is well known, the Schism began in 1378, with the election of Urban VI, which was opposed by Clement VII. It lasted until 1417, when 23 Cardinals belonging to three different "obediences" (the Pisans to John XXIII, the Avignonese to Benedict XIII, and the Romans to Gregory XII) assisted by 30 non-Cardinal ecclesiastics, during the Council of Constance (announced by John XXIII of Pisan obedience) elected Martin V, who was accepted by almost all Christianity (some Avignonese continued

the schism until about 1467; and from 1439 to 1449 the schism reopened with the Council of Basil). Although admitting as legitimate Popes those of Roman obedience, it must be said that much was doubted in the past. Alexander VI considered himself the successor to Alexander V, a "Pisan" not a "Roman"; and Saint Vincent Ferrer († 1419) supported, from 1378 to 1415, the "Avignonese" pope, Benedict XIII (Pedro de Luna), as he was his confessor... Some thought that all three popes were objectively doubtful, and therefore not popes; in this case, Christianity would have found itself not with three popes (which is impossible) or with one pope and two antipopes, but rather with a very long period of Sede Vacante [73].

While defending the legitimacy of the "Roman" obedience, the Jesuit theologian Zapelena does not consider as impossible the hypothesis according to which, if all three pretenders to the throne of Peter were dubious popes, they would have been null, merely putative popes. In this case, jurisdiction and magisterium in act were lacking in the Church... and from a purely legal point of view, even so for the legitimate electors, (all the cardinals and residential bishops were also doubtful!); precisely what the TC (and in his day Father Cantoni) found to be impossible, contrary to the Faith. Not so, thought the eminent theologian of the Gregoriana, Father Timoteo Zapelena; he limited himself to explaining how, in this hypothesis, Christ would have supplied the jurisdiction necessary (for election) in favor of those who enjoyed at least a "colored titled" (apparent) to participate in that atypical conclave [74], which, in fact, elected Martin V. The indefectibility and visibility of the Church would not have been compromised even in this eventuality, since it was still possible to proceed with a valid election of the Pope. This is what we argued in the previous chapter. In conclusion, our position (contrary to that of the Society of Saint Pius X) does not compromise the indefectibility of the Church, while theologically describing and analyzing a situation that the TC itself calls "*a Conciliar tragedy*" (p. 24).

The end of the Profession of Faith and the Pure Oblation (the late character of sedevacantism) (pp. 27-29, 40-41)

This objection by the TC also refers to indefectibility: the Church ceases to exist if - even if just for a moment - the public profession of Faith and the celebration of the Divine Sacrifice ceases. Now, for sedevacantists, the vacancy of the Apostolic See would be part of the public profession of faith; and the celebration of the Mass in communion with false popes ("the una cum mass") would not be a Pure Oblation. Therefore, due to the indefectibility of the Church, the declaration of the vacancy of the Apostolic See and the celebration of the "non una cum Mass" should have existed since 1965, the date from which it claims that the Sede Vacante should have certainly begun. However, the TC concludes triumphantly that things were not so: sedevacantism was late (born between 1973-1979): therefore, in the hypotheses of the sedevacantists, the public profession of faith, the celebration of the Mass and the Church itself would have ceased to exist from 1965 to 1973-1979, which is impossible.

First of all, we note that if a certain part of a syllogism (of an argument) is false, the conclusion must be false, or in any case not demonstrable. Now, we have already seen that it is false to characterize sedevacantism as late, as the TC affirms: it is dated not from 1973-1979, but from 1965 and even, preemptively, from 1962. This argument of the TC is therefore lacking in its fundamentals, and the conclusion remains undemonstrated.

We could stop there.

However, we would like to underscore how, even if the TC's hypothesis was true (e.g. the non-existence of sedevacantism from 1965 to 1979/79), the conclusion would still remain false. The objection, in fact, is

Abbè de Nantes and Fr. Barbara in 1968 in Paris at a conference on the new catechism

substantially identical to the one made in opposition to Father Guérard des Lauriers in 1980 by Jean Madiran (in the meantime, he too separated, like Father Cantoni, from Archbishop Lefebvre to accept *Ecclesia Dei*) who denounced the "*late character*" of the Thesis. To Madiran's objection at that time, Abbé Lucien responded, who did not make use of all the historical arguments published in this article; yet, even today, I still consider as valid the accurate answer that Abbé Lucien gave to Jean Madiran on the *Cahiers de Cassiciacum* [(75)], to which I refer the reader if need be.

I might add that the declaration of the *Thesis of Cassiciacum* (that John Paul II is not formally the Pope) does not directly belong to the Catholic faith [(76)], as it has not (yet) been defined as such by the Church: those who recognize John Paul II as the legitimate Pontiff are not - for this reason - necessarily outside of the Church [(77)]. In the same way, the Sacrifice of the Mass celebrated in communion with John Paul II - although objectively sacrilegious, not always subjectively so - is always the Holy Mass (as are the masses celebrated by the Greek schismatics). The example of Padre Pio that the TC adopted (p. 41) (the holy Capuchin celebrated "una cum") proves either too much or nothing, since, in addition to celebrating in union with Paul VI, he also obeyed Paul VI (something that Archbishop Lefebvre and the Society of Saint Pius X took care not to do). In this regard, the example of Saint Vincent Ferrer comes to mind, who from the beginning of his priesthood (in 1378) and for the best of 37 years, testified to the Faith, celebrating the Mass in communion with a (probable) antipope. Objectively, and in its external form, the Saint was a schismatic, and it was prohibited for Catholics to attend his Mass; even though he belonged, at least *in voto*, to the Church, and as a result of his good faith and invincible ignorance, he testified to his Faith (confirming it with miracles) and offering to God a sacrifice that was pleasing to Him. This also applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to those Catholics who had remained intact in their profession of Faith and who celebrated with the Catholic rite, but who - through invincible ignorance (known only by God) - adhered to a false authority and consequently celebrated in communion with this false authority. The public breaking of communion with John Paul II (and the consequent celebration of the Mass without naming him at the point in the canon which prescribes naming the Supreme Pontiff) is certainly part of the profession of Faith for those, of course, who are not, in this regard, in a state of invincible ignorance.

The basic answer, however, to this objection as well will be given in the following chapter, concerning the peaceful acceptance of the papal election as an *a posteriori* proof of the legitimacy of a Pontiff.

Related issue; the pacific acceptance of the Papal election (pp. 28-33; 50-60)

This is a "*related issue*" to that of indefectibility. The TC, however, gives great importance to this related issue regarding indefectibility, dedicating 27 pages to it. The objection is not new, and to it the supporters of the *Thesis of Cassiciacum* have already amply responded (even if the TC believed the contrary, see p. 33). There would be nothing to add to what Abbé Lucien [(78)] has written on this issue, were it not for that the TC does not know, or pretends not to know about this text, which it then tries to refute on the basis of

some quotations from *Sodalitium*. Let's see what it is all about.

Our opponent maintains (p. 30) "*it is, however, a dogmatic fact, that is, a fact that must be admitted as absolutely certain due to its direct connection with dogma, that Paul VI was pope on the day of his election to the Supreme Pontificate* [and also subsequently as specified elsewhere by the author]. *The formal reason on which this dogmatic fact is founded consists in the fact that a new pope, recognized as such by the Church dispersed around the world, is certainly pope. Like it or not, it is what happened on June 21, 1963 to Cardinal Montini. This does not mean that it is the Universal Church that elects a pope, but that the peaceful recognition on its part is the sign that removes any eventual doubt.*"

This thesis is consistently attributed to Cardinal Billot by the TC, the only author cited [(79)], even if it later states (p. 57 note 21) that it is the "*morally unanimous consensus of theologians*" implying that it is "*a sentence which is theologically certain*", "*a sure criterion of Divine Revelation*" [(80)].

In responding to this objection I will concern myself first of all in the value of the thesis (according to which the pacific acceptance of the universal Church gives infallible certainty to the legitimacy of the election of a pope) and then of its foundations.

The value of the "Thesis of Cardinal Billot": it is a theological opinion; without realizing it even *La Tradizione Cattolica* admits it. And further: should theologians be interpreted in the light of the magisterium of the Church, or vice versa?

As regards the value of the thesis, I maintain, along with Abbé Lucien (p. 108), that "*understood in the absolute sense assumed by the argument*", taken up by the TC, "*it is only a theological opinion and not the teaching of the Church or of Revelation*". The TC bitterly fights against this position and even accuses me of dishonesty for supporting it (p. 56), without realizing that it is, itself, in an irreconcilable contradiction (the TC would speak of it - so that everyone would understand - as aporia). In fact, as I already noted in the second part of this article when speaking of Archbishop Lefebvre's "prudential position" endorsed by the TC, it is possible that one day the Church will tell us that Paul VI and John Paul II never have been, or ceased to be, Popes; but then it is not true that we are CERTAIN of the fact that they are popes, as is supported based on the thesis of "the peaceful acceptance by the Church".

But there is more. The TC writes (pp. 55-56): "*What the learned Cardinal [Billot] claims is therefore reduced* [by *Sodalitium*] *to a highly questionable personal opinion (when in reality it is a dogmatic fact admitted by all theologians - See Da Silveira, La Nouvelle Messe de Paul VI: Qu'en penser?, p. 296)....*". Since the TC invokes the authority of Da Silveira on the matter (and therefore of the then Bishop of Campos who approved the book) let's see what one can read in it:

"*...Let us consider only the most important hypothesis in our perspective: the election of a heretic to the pontificate. What would happen if a notorious heretic was elected and assumed the pontificate without anyone contesting the election?*

At first glance the answer to this question is very simple in theory: since the Church cannot allow the whole Church to be in error regarding its Head, the Pope peacefully accepted by the whole Church is the true Pope. It would be duty of theologians then, on the basis of this clear theoretical principle, to resolve the concrete problem that would arise: either to demonstrate that the Pope was not a notorious and formal heretic at the time of the election; or to demonstrate that he subsequently converted; or to verify that his acceptance by the Church was not peaceful and universal; or even to present another plausible explanation. A more in-depth examination of the question would reveal, however, that even from a theoretical point of view, an important difficulty arises: ***it would be necessary to determine precisely what this concept of***

peaceful and universal acceptance by the Church is. *For this acceptance to be considered peaceful and universal, is it sufficient that no cardinal contested the election? Is it enough that in a Council, for example, almost all the Bishops have signed the acts* [of the Council], *recognizing by the very fact, implicitly, that the Pope is the true Pope? Is it enough that no voice, or almost no one, has raised a cry of alarm?* ***Or, on the contrary, could a very generalized but often widespread distrust be sufficient to destroy the apparently peaceful and universal acceptance in favor of this Pope? And if this distrust became a suspicion for a number of minds, a positive doubt for many, a certainty for some, would this peaceful and universal acceptance exist? And if these distrusts, suspicions, doubts and uncertainties surfaced from time to time in private conversations and writings, and here and there in publications, could we still qualify as peaceful and universal the acceptance of a Pope who was already a heretic at the moment of his election by the Sacred College?*** *It is not part of the task of this work to answer such questions. We want only to formulate them, asking those with authority in the matter to clarify them.*" (81)

It is surprising that the anonymous author of the TC stopped reading on page 296 so that pages 298-299 escaped him: had he read them, he would have realized that they take away all the absolute and probative value, and therefore all the certainty, of his thesis...

One can, naturally, disagree with Da Silveira. However, it is more difficult to invoke the **unanimous** consent of all theologians... This is even less possible if, among these theologians, are two Popes in the exercise of their papal magisterium: Paul IV and Saint Pius V. The TC doesn't ignore the Bull *Cum ex apostolatus* by Pope Paul IV (see pp. 55-58); omitting to say (but this does not change things much) that this Bull was confirmed by Pope Saint Pius V. However, the TC - which gives so much value to the opinion of theologians (who are still private doctors) - gives no value to an act of the Pontifical magisterium, which is the Bull of Paul IV, indeed it is ridiculed, as we shall see. We are reproached for favoring the teaching of Paul IV in opposition to that of theologians (TC, p. 57): TC should rather be careful not to favor the teaching of theologians over that of the Pope!

Let's see the TC's - truly disconcerting - way of proceeding in this regard. First, *Sodalitium*, and I myself, are suspected of intellectual dishonesty for arguing that the Bull of Paul IV has no juridical value, which could then be used to question the certainty of "Billot's" thesis (p. 55-56). Then it is stated that Paul IV, in his Bull, took "*an impossible case into consideration*," (p. 57, note 21): "*the document of Paul IV in fact concerns the election of a heretic to any ecclesial office, including the papacy. In this latter case, however, his application is impossible, as the case reveals itself metaphysically impossible if the elect is universally recognized*" (p. 57) when instead Paul IV teaches precisely that "*if the Roman Pontiff, before being elected to the Pontificate, while still yet a Cardinal, or before receiving the pontifical office, had deviated from the Catholic faith, or had fallen into some heresy, his elevation to a higher dignity or his entering into its function,* ***even if decided with the full agreement and with the unanimous consent of all the Cardinals****, is null, not valid, and without any value; and* ***the enthronement or official recognition of this same Roman Pontiff, or the obedience given to him in the exercise of his office...for any length of time, could not be declared as valid...***"

As to the first point, I do not understand how the TC can see intellectual dishonesty. It is one thing to support the current juridical validity of a document; it is another to recognize the doctrinal value of a magisterial text. Keeping with the subject of the papal election, for example, the prescription of Julius II which declared the simoniac election to be invalid no longer has legal value; however, the document of Julius II demonstrates that the Church can set conditions invalidating an election, including

simony, and that this hypothesis IS NOT, therefore (physically or metaphysically) impossible. We therefore come to the document of Paul IV (and Saint Pius V): on which the TC claims that by their legislating on a "*metaphysically impossible*" case does not demonstrate "*with what zeal the Church watches over the purity of the doctrine of its pastors*" (p. 57 note 21), but rather it would, if anything, demonstrate the opposite: in assuming an impossible case as possible, Paul IV and Saint Pius V would have been poorly intelligent and scarcely orthodox (as if they had published a Bull on the sex of Angels - showing them to have little intelligence - or on a possible fourth person of the Trinity - proving themselves to be very unorthodox). From a historical point of view however, it is established that for Paul IV and Saint Pius V, hypothesizing the election of a heretic to the Supreme Pontificate was by no means impossible, since by only a few votes, Cardinal Pole and Cardinal Morone, both of whom they considered to be heretics, would have been elected (the latter was imprisoned in Castel Sant'Angelo and processed by Paul IV) even through they were highly esteemed by many other prelates. The concrete difficulties in applying the Bull, the doubts that can easily arise on the legitimacy of the Supreme Pontiffs, explain how this point has not been taken up in more recent documents (exactly like the provisions on simoniac elections) promulgated in more tranquil times than those of the rampant Protestant heresy; but it is undeniable that in concrete terms, the bull of Pope Carafa achieved its purpose, blocking the way to the papacy to Cardinal Morone who, without this document, would probably have been elected in the Conclave and been legitimately recognized by the Cardinals, and therefore, at least initially, by the entire Christian world [82].

In any case, if, even if paradoxically, the TC considers the Bull of Paul IV and Saint Pius V not to be documents of the pontifical magisterium, which they are, but only as expressions of the opinions of two theologians called Carafa (Paul IV) and Ghislieri (Saint Pius V), united with all the Cardinals who wrote the Bull, one must admit that the "*morally unanimous consensus of theologians*" can no longer be vainly invoked.

As to the thesis of the universal peaceful acceptance of the Church as an infallible guarantee of the legitimacy of the election of a Pope, the true foundation is, once again, the indefectibility of the Church, which cannot fall into error regarding faith. However, even in this case, the Thesis of Cassiciacum does not endanger this indefectibility, while the position of the Society of Saint Pius X leads to insoluble contradictions...

We must now examine the basis of the so-called "Billot" thesis, since, as we are not dealing with the magisterium but with the judgments of theologians, we must pay attention to the reason given by this author in favor of a particular thesis, rather than the authority of the author itself.

This reason could not be the infallibility of the Church as the TC wrote on p. 31. In fact, it must be remembered, "*all the bishops, WITHOUT the Pope, ARE NOT infallible. Their common judgment cannot, therefore, provide us with an infallible standard for the case in question, in which the unity of the Bishops together is considered necessarily without the Pope (since it is his legitimacy that is the issue). On the other hand, as is often the case,* continues Lucien, *the same people (traditionalists) who refuse to consider the infallibility of Bishops WITH the Pope* [in order to reject our conclusion on the absence of authority], *would yet like to impose on us the recognition of the infallibility of these same Bishops WITHOUT the Pope!* [83] *[so as to affirm the legitimacy of the 'pope']*". In fact for a long time the infallibility of the ordinary, universal magisterium, that is, the Pope together with the Bishops, was denied, even though it was defined by Vatican I, as a way of arguing that Vatican II was not infallible...

And then the TC wants to give infallible value to the consent of the Bishops...without the Pope? [84]

Nor can this be the reason for the Church's need to "*know with certainty who Her legitimate pastor is and who has authority over Her*" (TC, p. 30). Surely we here at *Sodalitium* do not deny the importance of the question, on the contrary! It is the TC who contradicts itself by affirming that there is no certainty on this point (see the chapter on "prudential position"), and saying that it is enough to "conserve the faith as always" and "do like before" without resolving the problem of authority... However, it happened per se that the Church did not have, for a certain time, this certainty, despite the judgment of "Billot's" thesis: the case of the Great Schism demonstrates it in abundance, and the TC can consult the *Enciclopedia Cattolica* under the heading "*Pope*" (Vol. 9, columns 764-765) and "*Antipope*" to realize how, despite this "*certainty*" criterion, there are still doubts today about the legitimacy of certain Pontiffs and on the resulting number of popes.

The true foundation of "Billot's" thesis, as Lucien revealed, is therefore the indefectibility of the Church: that it is impossible that the entire Church - accepting a false Pontiff - would follow a false rule of faith, and instead, adhere to error. "*The absolute impossibility implicitly referred to by Cardinal Billot,*" rightly writes Lucien, "*is that the entirety of the faithful adhere to false doctrine: this immediately belongs to the indefectibility of the Church. Now, recognizing a false Pope does not yet mean adhering to a false doctrine. The said recognition can only lead to such acceptance in the case of a magisterial act which contains an error. But we have seen that there did exist an intrinsic criterion for discernment, accessible to every believer: the lack of contradiction regarding all that had already been taught infallibly by the Church*" (see above, pp. 17-22, especially p. 19). "*The indefectibility of the Church most certainly implies that a possible 'false pope' (considered true by all) cannot falsely define a doctrinal point freely discussed in the Church. Otherwise, the faithful would be deprived of any objective criterion to refuse their adherence to error. They would therefore be inevitably led into error and the indefectibility of the Church would be affected (this is the 'partial truth' of Cardinal Billot's thesis). But the indefectibility of the Church is not opposed to the fact that a 'false pope' claims to officially teach a point already infallibly condemned by the Church. On the contrary: we then have the infallible sign that this false pope does not possess the Divinely assisted Pontifical Authority: which is not to conclude that this absence of Authority entails rejecting Providentially granted Light. In the current situation, with Vatican II, God has given us the necessary and sufficient sign to avoid falling into error, and to unmask false popes. It is up to every faithful to welcome this Light, and draw its practical consequences.*" [85]

The *Thesis of Cassiacum* does not pose, therefore, an insoluble problem: the faithful are not infallibly deceived by a "putative pope" (as Bishop de Castro Mayer has called John Paul II) [86], a "pope" only in appearance, to whom there is no duty of adherence; on the contrary, the partisans of John Paul II's legitimacy - like the TC - must, if they are to be coherent, embrace his false teaching, compromising, since they depend upon it, the aforementioned indefectibility.

The last speculative objection by the TC to the *Thesis of Cassiacicum* alone, is that it is based on a "private judgment" (pp. 17-20; 34-39). The inanity of this objection, which is reduced to previous ones already resolved.

The TC admits that the supporters of the *Thesis of Cassiciacum* do not claim to take the place of the Church in acknowledging the (formal) vacancy of the Apostolic See. When we say that John Paul II is not formally the Pope, we do not claim to speak in the name of the Church nor with its authority (see Lucien, p. 119-120); we not only admit it, but the TC praises us for it (pp. 17 and 34). Poisoned

praise: the TC actually claims, in fact, to deduce "*the gravest consequences*" from this affirmation. Let's see if it corresponds to the truth... Is it licit for a Catholic to follow a "private judgment" in theological matters? And in our specific case, does a "private judgment" on the dogmatic fact that "John Paul II is not Pope" bring about the "gravest consequences"?

A "private judgment" that is to say a theological conclusion, is a sure guide for the faithful, to the extent in which this conclusion is founded on the given faith and right reasoning. However, it is illicit to use one's "private judgment" to oppose what is reputed to be the magisterium of the Church, as does the Society of Saint Pius X.

What does "private judgment" mean? Judgment is a conclusion of a syllogism, of a reasoning: if the reasoning is correct, the judgment will be true. Since we are speaking of things of faith (the legitimacy of a Pontiff is a dogmatic fact that can belong to the material object of faith), the reasoning in question is a theological reasoning which, based on at least one premise of faith, can reach an absolutely certain (called "theological") conclusion. We call this judgment "private" because it is not brought by the Church which is divinely assisted, but only by theologians (as undoubtedly Father Guérard des Lauriers was) and the faithful.

We do not see, per se, any problem of principle that can be posed by the fact of supporting a theological thesis as absolutely certain, and this in light of the faith (which the Society calmly does, and rightly, regarding the Council and the liturgical Reform). "Certain" because it is rigorously demonstrated (with those arguments that the TC fails to expose, so as then to be able to accuse us of stating very serious things in an arbitrary way). "In the light of faith", because the Thesis makes use of a premise of faith in its deductive demonstration, combined with facts of immediate observation and the principle of noncontradiction (see Lucien, p. 11) [87]. For the TC, however, our reasoning would be long, complex, inaccessible to the simple believer (p. 35) who would have to blindly trust his guides (with charismatic drifts) (ibidem)... The elaboration of the argument is certainly complex: not so, however, regarding the simple awareness of the fact that a true Pope cannot teach error, give us a bad Mass, and destroy (to the extent possible) the Church. This is what, ultimately and very simply, Archbishop Lefebfre himself wrote: "*a serious problem has arisen in the conscience and* ***in the faith of all Catholics*** *since the beginning of the pontificate of Paul VI. How can a pope, the true successor of Peter, assisted by the Holy Spirit, preside over the destruction of the Church, the deepest and most extensive in its history, in the space of such a short time, as no heresiarch had hitherto succeeded?*"

(Declaration of August 2, 1976; *Itinéraires*, n. 206, p. 280).

To this question, Archbishop Lefebvre responded in his letter to the Cardinals who met in Conclave on October 6, 1978: "*A Pope*

Rome 1973 Piazza San Pietro: Abbé Coache and Fr. Barbara direct the prayer vigil under the window of Paul VI during their Roman Pilgrimage

worthy of this name and a ***true*** *successor of Peter cannot declare that he is dedicated to the application of the Council and its Reforms*" (*Itinéraires*, n. 233, p. 130).

Abbé Lucien commented in these words: "*In effect, Catholic doctrine on the assistance of the Holy Spirit towards the Authority of the Church in general and the magisterium in particular dictate to us certain affirmations concerning the dogmatic fact: Paul VI was not Pope. Affirmations which, by the fact itself, are supported in the light of faith.*

Yes, it is impossible, it is a certainty of faith, that a 'Pope' could conduct the Church to its destruction with a flood of reforms imposed in practice and authenticated 'in the name of supreme authority'.

It is particularly impossible for a 'Pope' to promulgate, in union with the bishops representing the universal Church, a conciliar text contradicting an already established point of doctrine. This is impossible by virtue of the universal ordinary magisterium (...).

It is equally impossible for a true Pope to promulgate, establish and impose a 'dangerous and harmful' rite of Mass.

These are certainties of the faith, accessible to all, which answer the question that arises in the consciences of all Catholics" (Cahiers de Cassiciacum, n. 5, p. 76).

That Paul VI and John Paul II did not have the Authority is a necessary consequence of the fact - supported also by the TC - that Vatican II had erred in its teaching and that the new missal is morally unacceptable.

We conclude: if the arguments of the sedevacantists, and in particular those of the *Thesis of Cassiciacum*, give a rigorous demonstration of the fact that Paul VI could not have been, and John Paul II cannot be Pope, such a conclusion imposes itself on the intelligence of all the faithful capable of grasping it. They subscribe to it with certainty, and must conform their conduct to this truth. To do this, it is not necessary that the Church has explicitly pronounced itself; just as an intervention by the magisterium is not necessary to conclude that it is raining and it is therefore advisable to have an umbrella. However, the faithful do not yet subscribe to this conclusion (that John Paul II is not - formally - Pope) as a truth of faith, since the Church has not yet defined it as such. Whoever rejects this conclusion is not, by the very fact, a heretic who places himself outside the Church (cf Lucien, *op. cit.*, pp. 119-121). However, by denying this theological conclusion, and by affirming that John Paul II is Pope, one risks having to deny some truth of faith (both by accepting his teaching, which is contrary in many points to the magisterium of the Church; but also by rejecting his teaching, thus attributing error to the Pope and the Church). The position of the Society of Saint Pius X and of the TC is, in effect, illegitimate, opposing a private judgment (on Vatican II, on the new missal, on the new code of canon law, on the canonizations proclaimed by John Paul II, on his magisterium, etc.) to what, according to them, is still the Magisterium of the Church or its discipline: preferring one's own judgment to that of the Church is the attitude proper to the heretic.

Not even in the concrete case the "private judgment" ("John Paul II is not the Pope") places in a situation of the "gravest of consequences" as the TC fears. In fact, the Church's judgment in this regard is always possible.

The TC is not opposed to the fact that a simple faithful can, and even should, formulate "private judgments" on matters that are in themselves very difficult: "*naturally*," it writes, "*the rejection of other doctrinal elements (ecumenism, religious freedom, the Novus Ordo...) by every 'traditionalist' is placed on a very different level with respect to the rejection of the authority of contemporary pontiffs, as one certainly can note, in such cases, the incompatibility between a conciliar teaching and its opposite expressed in the perennial, dogmatic magisterium of the Church and therefore, the impossibility of*

Roman Pilgrimage of tradition: Year 1973

adhering to it" (pp. 38-39). The Society concludes that in moral life, for example, it is sinful to assist at a new mass, even when there are no other masses in which to assist on a day of obligation... Yet the TC itself excludes the possibility of affirming that the Church (therefore, a legitimate pope) could have given us poison (harmful doctrine and liturgy), even though this impossibility is taught by the First Vatican Council (DS 3075) and is evident to every faithful! Why? Let's try to understand TC's arguments together.

In general, [the TC claims] our Thesis would invent a third solution that does not exist between a purely private judgment, "*pronounced by a subject without authority, devoid of juridical or normative effect*" and a "*canonical judgment, that is, per se, itself public, with juridical effects, pronounced by a competent authority*". "*In summary,*" - concludes the TC summarizing our "errors" - "*the Thesis of Cassiciacum aims to somehow demonstrate that de facto legal effects arise from a judgment that proclaims itself to be non-juridical,* ***having normative value for the conduct of all the faithful***" (p. 37 note 12). Now, the TC does not realize they are reproaching us for exactly what they are doing: as we have noted, according to the Society, it is licit and dutiful to pass from a private judgment ("the new mass is bad") to a true norm "for the conduct of all the faithful" ("it is not permitted to assist at the new mass"). This nonexistent third position between private judgment that cannot obligate one's conscience, and the public and canonical judgment of the Church surely exists for the Society...but not when it could contradict their own positions! We respond thus: "private judgment" is devoid of juridical effect, I concede; it has no normative effect on the conscience of the faithful, I deny. If a person discovers they were not validly married, for example, she would be obligated to behave as an unmarried person, as regards the moral norm, and as a married person as regards the juridical fact. These are two different realities.

The TC insists: the case of the legitimacy of a Pope, and in general "*an historical and contingent given, on which the Church as such has not yet expressed itself*" (p. 39), is not comparable to that of an already defined teaching of the Church (as, for example, the doctrine on religious freedom, already condemned by the Church). We could object that the Church as such has not yet expressed its opinion on the new Mass, yet the Society rightly gives a negative (private) judgment that entails a norm for consciences (that one should not assist...).

The case of the legitimacy of an Ecclesiastical "authority" is not essentially different: there may be objective criteria, and not just subjective, which can lead one to the certain conclusion of the legitimacy or illegitimacy of such prelate. Consequently, the clergy and the people have the duty to break ecclesiastical communion with him, as the clergy and people of Constantinople did with the Patriarch Nestorius before he was condemned by the Council of Ephesus, in which he participated precisely because he had not yet been deposed. But, the TC objects, the case of the Pope is different. And our Thesis falls into subjectivism from three points of view: in affirming that such person is not the pope before the judgment of the Church; in affirming that one day such a person could be the pope again without there existing an

authority that could confirm it; in judging the Primal See, which cannot be judged by anyone.

Against these claims, we have noted what has already been said by Cardinal Albani, quoted by Boix: "*the heretical Pope, who returns to repentance before a declaratory sentence* [of heresy], *recovers, ipso facto, the pontificate, without a new election by the Cardinals...*" (*Tractatus de Papa*, t. I, p. 548). According to this author, then, the pertinaciously heretical Pope ceases to be Pope already, before a sentence by the Church (countering what the TC maintains) and could recover this same authority before a sentence by the Church (again, countering what is maintained by the TC). This does not exclude - as is the point of view of the *Thesis of Cassiciacum* - that there can be, and there must be, interventions by the authority of the Church. In fact, the Thesis postulates the intervention of a general, imperfect Council to declare that the 'pope materialiter' also ceases materially to occupy the See. According to the TC, that would be impossible, because it would be impossible for Cardinals and Bishops who are also only materialiter, to (re)find their jurisdiction. We respond that if such is possible in the case of a Pope, it is even more possible in the case of the Episcopate: that in any case said jurisdiction can come from God, as in the hypothesis advanced by Fr. Zapelena for the predicament of the Council of Constance. And again, both in the case of the Pope and that of the Episcopate, the criteria are anything but subjective: since the obstacle to the reception of the Authority is the adherence to Vatican II and its reforms; in order for authority to be recovered, it is necessary and sufficient that Vatican II is publicly condemned and its reforms declared void, something which can easily and incontrovertibly be ascertained by all.

The Primal See cannot be judged, the TC reminds us, and that is quite true. Therefore theologians have interpreted the texts of the Decretum Gratiani, those of Innocent III, and of the medieval theologians who affirm that the Primal See **can** be judged (only) in the case of heresy, in this sense: "*by the fact that a heretical Pope can be judged by the Council does not mean that a pope be subjugated to the Council; since, becoming heretical, he now is no longer the Pope*" (Cardinal Albani, in Boix, p. 547) [88]. Therefore, di facto, it is possible to judge a "*heretical Pope*" (and even more so for a heretic elected 'pope').

In summary: stating that John Paul II is not formally the Pope is a theological conclusion based on a premise of faith (the infallibility of the ordinary, universal magisterium, for example) and the established contradiction between Vatican II and the teaching of the Church (contradictions admitted by Archbishop Lefebvre).

Such judgment is only private: it may be a certain norm of behavior, but it has no juridical value: John Paul II is still 'pope' materialiter.

John Paul II can come to repentance, condemn Vatican II, and become formally the Pope: it is a doctrine also taught by authors of the past, like Cardinal Albani, and this can be clearly seen by everyone, without the need to resort to the private judgments of the "Guérardians".

In the same way it would be possible for everyone to see the public condemnation of Vatican II by those materialiter bishops, the authority in the Church, who, ipso facto, would have removed such obstacle. Authority from whom? The TC might ask. From God, who grants it to those who hold the titles of jurisdiction (titles given by the pope materialiter).

We note, among other things, how - in concrete terms - sedevacantists of all tendencies, supporters of Archbishop Lefebvre or the Abbé de Nantes would all be in agreement (at least in fact) if this happy eventuality came to happen, in recognizing and paying obedience to that Supreme Pontiff who will duly condemn Vatican II and declare null and void all its reforms. We all look forward to seeing this moral miracle soon, impossible for

Bishop Bernard Fellay, current Superior of the Society of Saint Pius X

men, but not for God, which would remove the de facto schism that has arisen between us.

Part V, in which some secondary objections are mentioned, of an order more practical than theoretical

It could be said that *Sodalitium's* response to the TC's objections is (finally) concluded, were it not for the fact that in addition to doctrinal arguments, all attributable to the question of the indefectibility of the Church, the TC adds arguments of a practical order as well, which have nothing to do, per se, with the question being debated (the Sede Vacante). They are: the difficulty of the question for the faithful ("*a question of difficult approach*", pp. 42-43); the episcopal consecrations by Archbishop Ngo-Dinh-Thuc ("*the actions of Mons. Ngo-Dinh-Thuc*", pp. 43-48); and the presumed sterility of sedevacantism ("*The fruits of sedevacantism*", pp. 48-49). De singulis, pauca.

A question of difficult approach?

For the TC, the question ("Is the Apostolic See vacant?") is one of difficult approach; the faithful cannot and are not required to examine it, and if some faithful believe in sedevacantism, they do it, however, based on the faith of those who embody it, or attempt to explain it. Therefore, the sedevacantist priests impose on the faithful an unsupportable weight as did the Pharisees, and deprive the faithful of the 'una cum' Mass...

I respond to this objection by recalling how obedience to the legitimate Pope is no trivial matter, as the eternal salvation of souls depends on it (see for example, Boniface VIII, DS 875); even the simplest believer understands that he cannot be saved if he disobeys the Pope. On the other hand, even the simplest believer can understand that a 'pope' who praises Luther, prays at the Wailing Wall, visits synagogues and mosques, kisses the Koran, offers sacrifices to other Gods, adores the statue of Buddha on the altar of Assisi, initiates Hindu cults, etc. CANNOT BE "sweet Christ on earth', his visible representative. To these same simplest of believers, the acts of "remorse" for the past sins of the Church also offer the possibility for them to observe an impossible contradiction in one who should be infallibly assisted. The TC maintains that the faithful can and should conclude that an Ecumenical Council has erred in difficult matters such as religious liberty or the constitution of the Church, and can grasp that the commonly accepted rite of the Mass is in opposition to the Council of Trent! And yet they do not admit that these same faithful can conclude that a Pope who erred in promulgating a Council and a rite of the Mass, is not infallible... because he is not the pope!

The TC believes they demonstrate their assertion by contrasting a writing of Bishop Sanborn (who supports the need for the study of aristotelian-thomistic metaphysics to understand our Thesis) and one by Abbé Belmont (who explains that our position is part of the daily exercise of Faith). The contradiction does not exist. The catechism that children study in preparing for First Holy Communion and the Summa Theologica by Saint Thomas teach the same truth, which are presented in a way adapted to the age and capacity of those studying it. To fully

John Paul II talking with Rabbi Di Segni

understand a theological thesis like ours requires the theological sciences, but the essential of the thesis (i.e. it is impossible for one who habitually teaches error to be pope) is within reach of all the faithful. Nor does Abbé Belmont mean that the daily exercise of Faith consists in blind faith by the ignorant; instead, he reminds those who forget it, that all the faithful have the supernatural habit of faith which makes them capable of grasping supernatural realities.

Sedevacantist priests are convinced that the legitimacy of a Pope is "a matter of faith", but for this they do not impose their conclusions on those who do not know how to grasp and understand its intimate coherence, leaving the matter to the judgment of God. The Pharisaic reference exists only in the mind of the author of the TC's article; who should remember that the Society itself teaches that one should not assist at the mass celebrated according to the new rite, and even to the mass according to the rite of Saint Pius V if celebrated with the Indult (and this, given the position of the Society, we simply don't understand) as well as the masses of sedevacantists, and even to the masses of priests who think like them but have not received "jurisdiction" from them (as in the case of the pastor of Riddes, Epiney, and his collaborator, the Abbé Grenon) [89]... Who is it that "*culpably and uselessly deprives some souls of the possibility of attending Holy Mass...*" (p. 43)?

Archbishop Thuc is not the Man of Providence...fortunately!

The TC dedicates a good 6 pages to the figure of Archbishop Thuc and to the episcopal consecrations he performed [90]. If this special edition by the TC were a class assignment, I would mark these pages in red with capital letters saying: "off topic".

In fact, the TC aims to demonstrate that John Paul II is pope - or at least, that it cannot be proven that he is not the pope. The matter of episcopal consecrations is, then, a topic completely foreign to this subject. There are sedevacantists who radically oppose the possibility of episcopal consecrations during periods of Sede Vacante; all the disciples of Archbishop Lefebvre are, on the other hand, in favor of consecrations without the Roman Mandate (those who are not in favor of it, have also abandoned Lefebvrianism). I therefore do not see how this topic, which transversally divides sedevacantists and non-sedevacantists, is relevant to the issue discussed.

Yet, in reality, there is a connection with the theme, unfortunately not the one that the TC wanted to express. They accuse Archbishop Thuc of not being the "man of Providence" or "a point of reference", due to the undoubted errors he committed. The accusation is revealing. The TC seems to need a "Man of Providence", for "a point of reference", beyond those objective points of reference that God has given us (Christ, the Church, the magisterium, the Pope). The TC, which accuses us of subjectivism, of charismatic tendencies, of following the leaders of sedevacantism without understanding it because of the blind trust that we have for them (and none of this is true), instead demonstrates how its position is in reality dependent upon the blind faith that they accord to one man, even though of great quality: Archbishop Lefebvre and, in practice, to his current heirs (undoubtedly endowed

with lesser qualities). This is the true, the great, the only argument that convinces members of the Society and its faithful: the authority of Archbishop Lefebvre, the "Man of Providence"; so that if Archbishop Lefebvre had declared the See vacant (as he many times was on the point of doing) the true Lefebvrians, who until then had declared: "John Paul II is the Pope" would have shouted: "John Paul II is not the Pope" (an event that, comical in itself, really happened at Ecône, after the "sedevacantist" speech by Archbishop Lefebve at Easter, 1986).

As for us, we do not know "men of Providence" or "points of reference" beyond those given by Christ: His Church, the papacy, the episcopate. We think that Providence made use of Archbishop Thuc, as it did of Archbishop Lefebvre and Bishop de Castro Mayer...to whom we recognize both qualities and defects [(91)]. As for canonizations, we leave them to the Pope, believing - unlike the priests of the Society - in his infallibility in this matter.

"*The fruits of sedevacantism*" according to the TC: sterility, rancor and poison... (pp. 48-49). Naturally, the TC is completely immune to these faults...

The last topic by the TC is the "sterility" of sedevacantism. "*By their fruits you shall know them*", says the Gospel, and "*there is no lack of those who think they can argue against sedevacantism by simply ascertaining its sterility*" (TC, p. 48). The author of this article throws a rock and then hides his hands, because, regarding this topic "*we are content to point it out, without the need ourselves to apply it*" (*ibidem*). However, he still applies it a little: "*There is, however, in sedevacantism a constant factor of sterility which is not dependent upon good or bad intentions, but rather on the objective situation in which it finds itself: on this danger we think we can express ourselves*". And here is the "danger" as the TC sees it: the 'average' (?) sedevacantist "*no longer has a real interest in fighting for the triumph of the truth in a Church that, de facto, he cannot consider his in any capacity*". Let us immediately reassure the TC: the triumph of the truth in the Church interests us above all else, so true that both the strict sedevacantists (Fr. Barbara in his time) and the Guérardians had contacted conciliar "bishops" to push them to reexamine Vatican II; let us rather say that the "triumph of the truth in the Church" is not achieved with negotiations that aim at a compromise that is entirely to the detriment of truth.

The TC insists in explaining our sterility: "*It is inevitable that in the long run, sedevacantism will no longer pour out its hatred and venom on modernism as such*" but rather on the Society of Saint Pius X: "*in this a chronic sterility certainly emerges* " (p. 49). Of course, we often write on the errors of the Society, which unfortunately do not so much directly concern the recognition of John Paul II, but rather those of Catholic truths (the infallibility of the magisterium, obedience to the legitimate authority, the impossibility of creating parallel, ecclesiastical Tribunals to those of the Pope or of denying the infallibility of Canonizations, etc). However, speaking only for *Sodalitium*, the "Society" question is one among many: we have written articles, given conferences and published books on the encyclicals of John Paul II and the history of the Council, on the relationship between Church and state, on the Jewish question, on Freemasonry, gnosticism, on current politics or Thomist philosophy, and then on spiritual life, etc. Practically all Sunday sermons focus on spiritual life, to it we dedicate the efforts of our ministry, the Apostolate of prayer, the Eucharistic Crusade, Catholic Schooling (through the sisters of Christ the King), spiritual exercises... The portrait that the TC makes of the priests and the faithful so-called "sedevacantist", is not a portrait, but a caricature.

"*Finally, within the ranks of sedevacantism, there is no lack of those who hope to see (...) a general capitulation by the Society of Saint Pius X, and therefore has*

been striving for decades to prove that it is imminent" (p. 49). The efforts were not very difficult; especially since the imminence of the capitulation was often confirmed to us by the priests of the Society themselves (who perhaps write for the TC) and who were even denounced by a Bishop of the Society as "traitors". In reality, we do not hope for this "general capitulation" just as we do not wish that the Society remains as it is, increasingly tending to become (as Abbé Simoulin, Superior of the Italian District said) a "small Church". We hope that the Society will fully take the Catholic position against modernism. Bishop Guérard des Lauriers said and often wrote that, in this case, he would have renounced exercising his episcopate because Archbishop Lefebvre would finally have fulfilled his duty. The hope of Bishop Guérard des Lauriers was disappointed: we hope to be able one day to struggle side by side with priests of the Society of Saint Pius X when they integrally profess Catholic doctrine. And we hope even more so, that this happy event is realized also for all the other Catholic priests who erroneously follow the Council, so that by abandoning its fatal illusions, they resume the path interrupted thirty years ago, for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. May the Lord also convert those people who are separated from His Church by heresy and schism from ages past, and let there be one Flock under only one Shepherd!

We pray:

"*O God, omnipotent and eternal, that all are saved and none perish, deign to guard those souls betrayed by the snares of the devil, so that, renouncing all perversity of heresy, their misguided hearts repent and return to the unity off your truth*" (Prayer for Good Friday).

"*O God, who corrects the errant, reunites the dispersed and preserves their unity, pour out the grace of Your union on the Christian people, so that, having removed all division, remaining faithful to the true shepherd of Your Church, they may worthily serve You"* (Prayer to remove schism).

"*We humbly pray O lord, so that by Your immense piety is granted to the Most Holy Catholic Church a Pontiff who is always pleasing to You for his zeal towards us and is always worthy of the reverence of Your people for their healthy governance to the glory of Your name*" (Prayer for the election of a Supreme Pontiff).

"*Ut in inimicos sanctae Ecclesiae humiliare digneris, Te rogamus, audi nos*" [That You may deign to humble the enemies of the Holy Church, we beg You, hear us] (Litany of the Saints).

Footnotes

1) In order to demonstrate the absolute opposition between strict sedevacantism and the *Thesis of Cassiciacum*, *La Tradizione Cattolica* (for example on p. 10) willingly cites my articles against strict sedevacantism, where I wrote, for example: "*strict sedevacantists preclude any coherent response consistent with faith and good sense with regard to the indefectibility of the Church*". I do not deny what I stated here. I must, however, add that such contradiction regarding the indefectibility of the Church is manifested above all (and increasingly so) in the polemicizing of the Thesis. Instead, we see in the writings of a pioneer of sedevacantism like Father Saenz a position quite close to the Thesis (see footnote 19 of this article). Even *L'Union pour la Fidélité* (a society directed by Father Barbara from 1980 to 1987 and which was strictly sedevacantist) exposed in an acceptable way the problem of indefectibility and of apostolicity, by admitting that there still exist "*truly Catholic Bishops, although lacking the exercise of the confession of faith, and apparently integrated into the new church* [of Vatican II]" (*L'Union pour la Fidélité, La situation actuelle de l'Eglise et le devoir des catholiques*, Ed. Forts dans la Foi, Tours, 1981, p. 149 and generally pp. 131-150). Naturally, this fully sedevacantist position as to the "pope", admitting in some bishops what it denied to John Paul II, went involuntarily towards the position of the officially abhorred Thesis; what was ironically underscored in the *Cahiers de Cassiciacum* (no. 6, May 1981, pp. 123-124: *Dernière heure: Le R.P. Barbara a [enfin] compris*). Abbé Grossin himself, a great enemy of the Thesis, had to unwillingly admit of its fundamental principles, as the result of another article in the same edition of *Sodalitium*.

2) UGO BELLOCCHI, *Tutte le encicliche e i principali documenti pontifici emanati dal 1740*, Vol.

IV, Pius IX, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Città del Vaticano, 1995, pp. 463-464.

3) *Ibidem*, pp. 380-383.

4) "*I cannot admit that, in the Society, we are allowed to refuse to pray for the Holy Father and therefore to recognize that there is a pope*" [meaning to name John Paul II as Pope, in the canon of the Mass] (spiritual conference at Ecône on May 3, 1979; quoted in B. Tissier de Mallerais, *Marcel Lefebvre, Une vie*, Clovis, 2002, p. 536). Since 1982, an oath must be signed by all the ordinands of the Society, and in which it is recognized that John Paul II is Pope. Whoever accepts this while secretly maintaining his own sedevacantism, even omitting the name of John Paul II in the Canon, is, however, tolerated in the Society.

5) In a document dated May 29, 1980 sent by Archbishop Lefebvre to three American priests in the Society of Saint Pius X, so that it could be signed by them, it reads: "*This is what our Superior and Bishop await from you: that you give your response to what has been asked of you about how you must think of the pope; the practice and the attitude of the Society since its very beginning. And that you do not give a public position, verbally or in writing, contrary to the attitude of the Society either on the matter of the pope or on the invalidity of the Novus Ordo. More clearly: on the matter of the pope, the practice of the Society is decidedly in favor of validity, with the benefit of doubt; on the matter of the Novus Ordo, the policy of the Society is to not decide whether it is, by its very nature, ex se, invalid. However, the Society recognizes that the definitive solution to these questions must necessarily await the magisterium of the Church in the future, when it is restored to normalcy*". The text was signed by Archbishop Lefebvre and three priests *(Ecône, point final*, Number 10 - new series - of the magazine *Forts dans la Foi*, May 1982, p. 68).

6) BERNARD TISSIER DE MALLERAIS, *Marcel Lefebvre, une vie*, Clovis, Etampes, 2002.

7) If I can make a contribution to a future new edition of the biography of Archbishop Lefebvre, permit me to recall the events of 1981, of which I was directly involved. Father Piero Cantoni, a professor at Ecône, taught during his lectures that the universal laws of the Church were guaranteed by infallibility, and that therefore it was impossible that the new mass (being a law of the universal Church) was bad in itself, and that yet we should abstain from assisting at them [while maintaining a preference for the Mass of Saint Pius V]. All the professors at Ecône, headed by the director, Abbé Tissier, supported Father Cantoni, with the one exception being Father Williamson (currently one of the four bishops). The seminarians were all interrogated by the director in this regard; the Italians were, generally, in solidarity with Father Cantoni, and were promoted to orders (for most it was ordination to the sub-diaconate), even those that declared calmly that during their vacation they assisted at new masses. The only one excluded from ordination to the sub-diaconate, was myself, who instead considered assisting at the new mass to be illicit. With the return of Archbishop Lefebvre to the seminary, precisely in the month of June, things changed. The Bishop definitively took the position against assisting at the new mass. Father Cantoni was permitted to preserve his opinions so long as he did not teach it in his lectures, otherwise, he said "I would have to close the seminary", which was founded on the Traditional Mass. No satisfactory answer was given to the thesis of Father Cantoni (and the Church) on the practical infallibility of universal ecclesial laws. In the summer, Father Cantoni, followed by almost all the Italian seminarians, left the Society of Saint Pius X and was incardinated into the diocese of Massa. In October, returning from vacation, the writer was ordained a sub-deacon. It is sad to relate that Father Cantoni, who on that occasion was treated as an apostate, did nothing more than support what the Society "prudentially" supported up to 1975, and which in 1981 it clearly became "imprudent" to support.

8) The text in question, written by Father Francesco Ricossa, is currently reproduced in all editions of the missal for the faithful republished by the Society of Saint Pius X in Italy.

9) In case of an agreement with John Paul II in fact, the followers of Archbishop Lefebvre would necessarily return to the 1969-1975 positions. The followers of Bishop de Castro Mayer, in tow with Bishop Rifan, are already assisting at the new mass.

10) The sentence continues thus: "*avoiding as much an eminently technical and academic vocabulary and phrasebook which often had the effect of rendering these issues inaccessible to those who, despite this, see themselves forced to make choices on this delicate problem or in any case to deal with it*". Even this attempt by the author, however, failed. The readers of *La Tradizione Cattolica* find in the Dossier "*a vocabulary and a phrasebook*" perhaps not "*eminently technical*", but not for this less "*inaccessible*" to most. Could not the author, a lover of simplicity, avoid, for example, using Greek terms such as "*aporia*" (p. 38 and others) or "*meiosi*" (p. 36)?

11) *La Tradizione Cattolic*a alludes to the alleged need on the part of sedevacantists to "*appeal (...) to the position currently supported by the Society of Saint Pius X*" (p. 60). The Author refers to the fact that for Abbé Lucien [a former member of the SSPX who later reconciled with the modernist Church], the "traditionalists'" refusal to accept the teaching of Paul VI and John Paul II and their refusal to consider them the proximate rule of our faith, would undermine the principle of recognition of these pontiffs on the part of the entire Church.

12) A brief biography in French of Father Joaquin Saenz y Arriaga was published by Abbè V. M. Zins in his magazine *Sub tuum praesidium* (n. 74, April 2003, pp. 21-57).

13) MAURICE PINAY, *Complot contra la Iglesia*, Spanish translation by Dr. Luis Gonzales, published by 13 Mundo libre, Mexico, 1968, with the imprimatur of the Archbishop of Hermosillo, Juan Navarete. The book was printed in Italian in Rome (August 31, 1962) and distributed to all the Council Fathers in October. The Austrian edition is from January 20, 1963, the Venezuelan 1968 and 1969 (I used the 1969 edition). The book was prepared over the previous 14 months. The book by Maurice Pinay (it is a pseudonym) was also presented to the Italian public in *Sodalitium*, no. 37, April-May 1994, pp. 33-45: *Il complotto giudaico-massonico contro la Chiesa Romana*; this article corresponded to Chapter XX of the book by Don Nitoglia *Per padre il diavolo. Un'introduzione al problema ebraico secondo la tradizione cattolica*, SEB, Milan, 2002.

14) Joaquin Sanz Arringa, *El antisemitismo y el Concilio Ecumenico. Y que es el progresismo*, La hoja de roble, Mexico (without place or date, but after the opening of the second session of the Council); LÉON DE PONCINS, *Il problema dei giudei in Concilio*, Tipografia Operaia Romana, Rome. In England, printed by The Britons, London (after the third session); *L'azione giudeo-massonica al Concilio* (sent to all bishops, see Fesquet, p. 504, 29 September 1964).

15) *Le journal du Concile, tenu par Henri Fesquet, envoyé spécial du journal le Monde*, by ROBERT MOREL, LE JAS PAR FORCALQUIER, 1966, p. 988. *Oltre a Le Monde* (17-18 October, pp. 1 and 8; 19 October; 20 October; 21 October) the news was spread by Laurentin in *Figaro* (16-17 October; 21 October), *La Croix* (21 October), *Il Messaggero* and *La Stampa* on October, 15. The monumental *Storia del Concilio Vaticano Secondo* by Giuseppe Alberigo (Peeters/Il Mulino, 2001, vol. V, p. 226) speaks of the fact ("*bishops disposed to vote for the declaration become definite heretics and the Council is then deprived of any power in mutating the antisemetic magisterium of the Church*") and notes that a text of the document can be found in Moeller, 2546. The text against *Nostra aetate* resulted in it being undersigned by 31 Catholic movements in France, the United States, Mexico, Spain, Argentina, Italy, Portugal, Chile, Austria, Brazil, Germany, Ecuador, Venezuela and Jordan. The value of these signatories, however, remains to be assessed, since among them is the French magazine, *Itinéraires*, who protested it with vehemence, denying the veracity of its support, and hypothesizing even that it was a "provocation" by progressives to have the "traditionalists" declared to be schismatics (See Jean Madiran, *Un schisme pour decembre*, in *Itinéraires*, n. 95, January-August 1965, interesting for its context and Madiran's position on the Council; Jean Madiran, *Mesures de sécurités et Analyse d'une provocation*, in *Itinéraires*, n. 98, December, 1965, pp. 1-32). When Madiran talks about a fake attribution by the progressives, he is wrong; the origin of the writing is, like the previous brochures, Mexican.

16) ALBERIGO, *op.cit.*, pp. 224-226 (according to whom the criticisms did not particularly concern no. 4 on the Jews); Fesquet, *op.cit.*, pp. 980-981. The document (letter from three Conciliar Fathers and a critical text of *Nostra aetate* on behalf of the *Coetus internationalis Patrum*) is in the Carraro collection, 39. I cannot understand why it wasn't published by Archbishop Lefebvre in *J'accuse le Concile* (Ed. St. Gabriel, Martigny, 1976), containing his interventions on Vatican II, and there is no mention of it in the biography of Archbishop Lefebvre by Bishop Tissier. Also surprising is that so little space was given to the criticisms at the Council to the doctrine of Chapter 4, *Nostra aetate*.

17) TISSIER, *op. cit.*, pp. 332-334.

18) In the last vote on the 15th of October, the "*non placets*" (I do not agree) were 250.

19) *La Tradizione Cattolica* writes regarding Father Saenz: "*the fact that the Mexican Jesuit - also known for his ability to write a book in just a few weeks - in his work 'La Nueva Iglesia Montiniana' just prior to 'Sede Vacante', did not assume a sedevacantist position, inducing (the reader) to definitively trace the position he publicly took to 1973. Again, for the record, 'La Nueva Iglesia Montiniana' had two editions, one in 1971 published by The Christian Book Club of America, in California, and the second in 1972 published by Editores Asociados, Mexico D.F.*" (p. 29). We respond to the TC: Father Saenz, doctor of Philosophy and Theology, was part of the group that wrote the book *Complotto contro la Chiesa*. His sedevacantism was, then, preventive! And more. In 1969, he was part of Abbé de Nantes' group. Therefore, the book *La Nueva Iglesia Montiniana* of August 15, 1971 affirms that Paul VI is not Pope (contrary to what *Tradizione Cattolica* maintains) from pag. 322 to 326, and 422 to 430. And more: On the 9th of January, 1972, in the "Assemblea dei difensori della tradizione" held in Rome, he maintained that Paul VI was Jewish (the same case made for antipope Anacletus II; see Antonio Rius Facius, *Excomulgado*, pp. 136-137). On January 25, 1972 he published "*Porché e excomulgaron? Cisma o Fé?*". In this book (pp. 253-254) he wrote, commenting on a letter to Paul VI by a certain Abbé Rayssiguier: "*This most grave situation which no one can deny, poses, as expressed in my book 'La Nueva Iglesia Montiniana' a theological and practical problem of the greatest transcendence: Is Giovanni Battista Montini the true Pope? I have already exposed various opinions, among priests and lay people deeply worried about the self destruction of the Church, in which the principal responsible is, without a doubt, Paul VI, stated publicly in various parts of the world. The author of this letter expressly adheres to the opinion of Abbé Georges de*

Nantes, Father Barbara, and many other distinguished authors who continue to believe, despite the deviations of the pontificate which they denounce, that on points regarding faith and morals Giovanni B. Montini is a true and legitimate Pope, although being misled and heretical. I, on the other hand, think the contrary: he is a Pope de jure, but not de facto. Meaning: according to law, he is the Pope, but before God he is not the Pope. His election, apparently legal, was flawed at the root. This is my theological opinion". An opinion, therefore, founded on Faith: "*in any contrary case, we must admit to unexplainable consequences*" that would render doubtful the words expressed by Christ in his 'Tu es Petrus'. This position (Pope de jure but not de facto, so similar to the materialiter/formaliter of Father Guérard des Lauriers) was taken up in his book *Sede Vacante* in March 1973 (p. 23). Abbé Zins (*op. cit.*, p. 42) quoted another passage from *Sede Vacante* (p. 118) in which Father Saenz makes a distinction: "*We can think with justification, and that is how I think, that before this formal declaration, the per se invalid acts of a Pope who before God is not the Pope or no longer the Pope having ceased to be a member of the Church, nevertheless retains its legal value in that which is legitimate due to the general principle of law: 'in errore communi supplet Ecclesia', in case of common error, the Church supplies*". I do not think that the principle "Ecclesia supplet" is applicable (Ecclesia IS the Pope), but in any case one sees how even Father Saenz admits a certain juridical value to the acts of one who was not (any more) Pope, before the formal declaration of an imperfect Council. The *Thesis of Cassiciacum* limits this case only to the provision of the Sees, indispensable for the existence of the Church and of its independent power of jurisdiction per se (current *simpliciter* sedevacantists should, then, understand the Thesis in this regard, rather than condemning it with such vivacity!).

Msgr. Carli, Bishop of Segni, during the Council opposed to the Conciliar documents

20) FRERE FRANÇOIS DE MARIE DES ANGES, *Pour l'Eglise. Quarante ans de Contre-Réforme catholique*. Tomo III (1969-1978) *Contre la dérive schismatique*, Ed. Contre-Réforme Catholique, Saint-Parres-lès-Vaudes, 1996, pp. 10-15, 110ss. Abbé Coache gives his version of the facts in *Les batailles du Combat de la Foi*, Chiré, 1993, pp. 77-81.

21) CARLOS A. DISANDRO, *Iglesia y pontificato. Una breve quaestio teologica*, Hosteria volante, La Plata, 1988 (a reprinting of the brochure of 2 May 1969).

22) "*From 1967, Abbé de Nantes was discomfited in seeing some traditionalists, certainly isolated, placing in doubt the authority and legitimacy of Paul VI; Doctor Hugo Kellner in the United States, for example, had in fact declared the lapse of the Supreme Pontificate*" (François de Marie des Anges *op.cit.*, p. 107). This information was confirmed by the writer Patrick H. Omlor in his letter of April 5, 2003 to Father Anthony Cekada, which informs us of the letter of Doctor Kellner to Cardinal Browne on the legitimacy of Paul VI and Vatican Council II (pages 6-8 of the letter).

23) We owe this information to Professor Lauth himself (a telephone meeting on April 9, 2003). On him, see Tissier, *op.cit.*, p. 476; *Un combat pour l'Eglise. La Fraternité Saint Pie X (1970-1995)*, ed. Bishop Tissier de Mallerais, Fraternité Saint-Pie-X, Menzingen, 1997, pp. 8 and 99; R. Lauth, *Die verschobene Kirche*, Christian Jerrentrup Verlag, Munich, 2003, 2 volumes.

24) Also in Italy, as shown by the publication of the Letters of Abbé Georges de Nantes by the publisher Volpe in 1969. In the preface by Hilarius, we read: "*a heretic Pope or even a disbeliever one, who makes an attempt to the purity of revealed doctrine, ipso facto loses his function of primacy".*

25) We point out to *La Tradizione Cattolica*, however, that this same argument will be adopted by the Abbé de Nantes (and recently by Dom Gérard O.S.B.) for accepting the legitimacy of the New Missal (See FRERE FRANÇOIS, *op. cit.*, vol. III, p. 59 ss, and *CRC*, n. 30, March 1970, pp. 92ss). One must know how to be coherent!

John Paul II

26) This is the weak point of Abbé de Nantes' argument. Minimizing the infallible magisterium, he thought, and thinks, that the Conciliar acts are not, in principle, guaranteed infallibility; they might therefore be - at the same time - erroneous, and endorsed by a legitimate Pope. It is the same position as the Society of Saint Pius X: influence of the *Action Française* school?

27) FRERE FRANÇOIS, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

28) *CRC*, no. 89, February 1975, *Frappe à la Tête*.

29) FRERE FRANÇOIS, *op. cit.*, pp. 396-397.

30) FRERE FRANÇOIS, *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 345-350.

31) FRERE FRANÇOIS, *op. cit.*, pp. 400-410

32) The text, in Portuguese, is from 1970. It was published in a French edition in 1975 by the *Diffusion de la Pensée française* with the title: *La nouvelle messe de Paul VI. Qu'en penser?*. The sale to the French public was, however, delayed for a long time at the request of the TFP.

33) These new studies - Father Vinson noted at the time - we owe to the pen of Fr. Guérard des Lauriers.

34) *Précisions théologiques sur quelques questions actuellement controversée*s, editorial in No. 34 137 of *Itinéraires*, November 1969, pp. 1-17.

35) The controversy over this matter, between Archbishop Lefevre (and the Society) [who denied having signed *Dignitatis humanae* and *Gaudium et Spes*] - and Father de Bligniéres and Abbé de Nantes (who published documents proving the contrary) is faithfully reported by Frère François, *op. cit.*, Vol III, p. 391, note 1.

36) Archbishop Lefebvre's attitude during this period is described in tome II of the already cited book by Frere François de Marie des Anges (p. 138, 146, 149-150; 160-161, 212-214, 291-292, 335-336). In private, the judgment of Archbishop Lefebvre on Paul VI was quite different from that which he gave in public...

37)ALEXANDRE MONCRIFF, *Le combattant de la Foi*, in *Fideliter*, n. 102, Nov-Dec. 1994, pp. 69-70.

38) "*Archbishop Lefebvre encouraged us, from a little afar; even filling us with hope: 'We will have the signatures of 600 Bishops!'. Alas, not even his was there*" (preface of Bishop Guérard des Lauriers on the reissue of the *Brief Critical Examination*, Saint Joan of Arc edition, Villegenon, 1983, p. 6).

39) Jean Madiran published in *Itinéraires* (n. 139, January, 1970, pp. 19-25) his "*Letter to a bishop*" [Archbishop Lefebvre] of November 28, 1969. Here are some excerpts: "*You tell me that a great number of bishops around the world are aware of the situation: very well, but where are they? You may recall, Excellency, that in other circumstances and up to and including the question of the new catechism inclusively, I directly and indirectly advised clergymen (...) to stay quiet: don't be discovered, that is, public declarations are useless, don't offer yourself unnecessarily to persecution (...). I recall this only to further emphasize how different my opinion is now with regard to the [new] Mass. More than an opinion, it is an appeal; an urgent appeal, a request for aid; not from me, but from the Christian people. As for the Mass, what is needed is for Bishops to speak out publicly. Clearly I do not ask that they attack the person [of Paul VI], that they put this person aside, but rather that they stand up against the act of the Novus Ordo Missae and against the doctrine it implies (or sometimes enunciate). Until now, only one French priest, the Abbé Georges de Nantes, and in the entire world, only two Cardinals have spoken openly* [by subscribing to The Brief Examination composed by Father Guérard, ed.]. *The long note given by a 'group of theologians' in La Pensee Catholique is of a most useful content, but it remains anonymous* [this was also by Father Guérard, ed.]. *For the Mass, we need witnesses to say their name and put their person and if necessary, their life on the balance. Let them speak! (...) It isn't even a matter of taking the initiative; Cardinal Ottaviani went ahead, all that is needed is to follow him, and not leave him alone (...)*".

40) The first to respond to the appeal of Madiran in *Itinéraires* were Father Calmel O.P. (in the same number 139 in which the appeal to Archbishop Lefebvre was published), the Abbé Dulac (no. 140, February, 1970, p. 31) and Father Guérard des Lauriers O.P. (no. 142, April, 1970, pp. 48-50), manifesting himself as the author of the *Brief Critical Examination* and the article published in *La Pensee catholique*. The three declarations were republished in

the special edition of *Itinéraires* on the Mass in the September-October edition 190 (no. 146). Father Calmel spoke. Father Guérard spoke. Archbishop Lefebvre did not speak.

41) ARCHBISHOP MARCEL LEFEBVRE, *Un évêque parle*, Dominique Martin Morin, Jarzé, 1974. The Italian Edition (Rusconi, Milan) is from 1975. Scanning the pages of the book, one notices that among the "discourses and allocutions" by Archbishop Lefebvre for 1969, there was not a single allusion to the problem of the New Mass...A Bishop...does not speak.

42) See COACHE, *op.cit.*, Chapter XIV. Abbé Coache writes: "*But in May, 1975, we did not do a Roman March. We had planned it and begun to organize it, when the Traditionalist movement CREDO, with Michel de Saint Pierre, announced the setting up of a great pilgrimage to Rome for the year 1975 under the presidency of Archbishop Lefebvre; we could do nothing but disappear and give way*" (p. 210) [Actually, he could have protested, as Father Vinson did in the *Simple Letter*]. Bishop Tissier explains - in part - what happened: after the suppression of the Society on the part of the Bishop of Fribourg (May 6, 1975) "*Archbishop Lefebvre's response was threefold: a magnificent pilgrimage to Rome organized by the CREDO association for Pentecost of that Holy Year presided over by Archbishop Lefebvre with his entire seminary, showing by this his attachment to Rome as always; then a letter of submission to the successor of Peter, written in Albano the 31st of May, that included a petition for revising his process; and finally a recourse to the Tribune of the Apostolic Signatura against the decision by Bishop Mamie, deposited on June 5*" (p. 509).

43) See COACHE, *op.cit.*, Chapter X. The *Lacordaire Maison* in Flavigny was acquired in 1971; Abbé Coache, Father Barbara and Father Guérard des Lauriers met there. In 1973, another little seminary was acquired in Flavigny, to be destined for the same use. Bishop Tissier writes that the initiative failed, but doesn't say why *(op. cit.*, p. 502, n. 5). We know, however, through a letter dated February 21, 1974 from Abbé Coache to Father Barbara in which he manifests his discouragement due to Archbishop Lefebvre's refusal to support the initiative: "*Despite his good and affectionate words, it is clear that Archbishop Lefebvre refuses to collaborate on the seminary issue (...). When I asked him for his support by mentioning in his little bulletin our foundation and the collaboration that he said he would give it, he refused! (...) He is very frightened, on the one hand by the reaction of Bishops, on the other hand by the other Traditionalists who would accuse him of "identifying" with "Combat de la Foi"* (*Ecône, point final*, n. 10/1982 of *Forts dans la Foi*, p. 11, n. 8). Years later (1986), Archbishop Lefebvre will ask Abbé Coache for the sale of the *Lacordaire* house in Flavigny to establish his first-year seminarians. Abbé Coache is a case (and not the only one), of a "sedevacantist" (in private) always faithful to Archbishop Lefebvre.

44) The Society of Saint Pius X had always maintained that such a decree was canonically invalid, so much so thatArchbishop Lefebvre appealed - in vain - to the Apostolic Signatura. Bishop Tissier, in his biography of Archbishop Lefebvre, courageously admits now that the suppression was canonically valid (*op. cit.*, pp. 508-509).

45) Letter from Archbishop Lefebvre to Paul VI of June 22, 1976, see FRERE FRANÇOIS, *op. cit.*, vol. III, p. 424.

46) "*This conciliar Church is a schismatic Church because it breaks with the Catholic Church of all time*" ("*Some reflections regarding the suspension a divinis"*, June 29, 1976, see Tissier, *op.cit.*, p. 514).

47) "*The Council, having turned its back on Tradition and broken with the Church of the past, is schismatic (...). If it is certain that the faith taught by the Church for twenty centuries contains no error, it is much less absolutely certain that the pope is truly the pope. Heresy, schism, excommunication ipso facto, invalidity of election, are equally causes which, eventually, can make that one has never been pope, or that is no one any more. In this case, clearly very exceptional, the Church finds itself in a similar situation to that which happens after the death of a Supreme Pontiff. Because finally a serious problem arises in the conscience of the faith of all Catholics about the pontificate of Paul VI. How can he be a pope, true successor to Saint Peter, guarantor of the assistance of the Holy Spirit, and preside over the destruction of the Church, the deepest and most extensive in history, in the space of so little time, as no heresiarch had ever been able to do? To this question, there needs to be a response one day"* (Declaration of Archbishop Lefebvre in *Figaro* on August 4, 1976 reproduced in *Monde et vie*, n. 264, August 27, 1976; see TISSIER, *op. cit.*, pp. 514-515; FRERE FRANÇOIS, *op. cit.*, vol III, p. 433, note 4).

48) See Zins, *op. cit.*, pp. 53-57.

49) *Forts dans la Foi*, n. 49, pp. 11 ss.

50) See TISSIER, p. 530; FRERE FRANÇOIS, vol. III, p. 434-436; ARCHBISHOP LEFEBVRE, *Le coup de maître de Satan*, Saint-Gabriel edition, 1977, p. 42 ss.

51) The decision was due to an attack by Father Barbara against a certain Elaine Gaille, the "Seer of Fribourg", to whom the laity that surrounded Archbishop Lefebvre at Ecône was devoted.

52) For the circumstances surrounding these facts, see *Sodalitium*, no. 18, pp. 11-13, DON GIUSEPPE MURRO, *Vita di Mons.. Guérard des Lauriers*.

53) In *Cor unum* no. 4, p. 3, the Declaration of Archbishop Lefebvre was preceded by a "preliminary note" which explained the context. It refers to a conference of January 16, 1979: "*it concerned especially the matter of the Pope*" and "*replied to those*

who reproached me for having gone to Rome to be interrogated by the Sacred Congregation for [the Doctrine of] the Faith". His stance on sedevacantism was therefore caused by the negotiations begun with John Paul II in 1979, and from the negative reaction by Father Guérard des Lauriers and others.

54) On the illegitimacy of Paul VI "*I have a secondary doubt, and not an absolute evidence*" (Archbishop Lefebvre to Father Guérard, letter from the beginning of 1979, see *Sodalitium*, no. 18, p. 12).

55) *La Tradizione Cattolica* writes: "*In fact, this passage [Mt 28, 20] has greatly embarrassed Father Guérard des Lauriers and all those who follow his thesis. Father Guérard's response was rather disconcerting...a hallucinatory exegesis*" (p. 24). Father Cantoni wrote: "*it is evident that Matthew XXVII: presents a serious difficulty for the thesis in question. This is confirmed by the exegesis that Father Guérard sees himself forced, albeit hesitantly, to attempt*". Father Guérard appropriately recalled that "*the Cassiciacum Thesis is certainly not based on the verse whose exegesis is being discussed*" (*Cahiers de Cassiciacum*, no. 6, May 1981, p. 112). He then reminded Father Cantoni: "*In reality, if the state of crisis in which the Church finds itself means that Matthew XXVIII presents, as Father Cantoni observes, a 'serious difficulty', this serious difficulty concerns not only the Cassiciacum Thesis; since it is incomparably more serious if the inconsistent attitude of the Society founded by Archbishop Lefebvre is upheld. While it is very commendable indeed to consider what must happen at the end of the world, it is much more urgent to examine how the verse in question applies to what is happening now. If Father Cantoni unconditionally supports the E1 exegesis, he must explain to us how his current behavior is compatible with this exegesis. Indeed, anyone who disobeys 'authority' now, when professing to recognize it as if it were Authority, is affirming in act, ipso facto, that Christ is not with the Authority now as he was in the time of Pius XII, or of Pius XI, or 'before'. The difference, which goes as far as having two opposing practical behaviors, that of now and that of before, is towards an Authority that is supposed to always be the same, as Father Cantoni and all 'Ecône' affirm, this difference requires the assigning of another difference, which reaches the point of opposition, between the two relationships that the claimed Authority has with Christ, namely: the relationship of 'now' and that of 'before'. May Father Cantoni deign to tell us what this difference is. So long as he abstains from it, this abstention constitutes, for the pseudo-doctrine underlying Ecône's behavior, 'a serious [and even very serious] difficulty'; to the point that Father Cantoni destroys himself; with his exegesis he condemns his pseudo-doctrine as erroneous*" (p. 112). May, 1981...two months later Father Cantoni essentially agreed with Father Guérard des Lauriers by abandoning the Society of Saint Pius X to be incardinated into the Diocese of Massa; the New Mass, communion in the hand, Vatican Council II, etc. To the other "Father", who like Father Cantoni at the time "*wields Matthew XXVII:20 against the 'others'*" while trampling "*in deeds what he shouts aloud*" [that John Paul is Pope], we ask for the same consistency and honesty that Father Cantoni had in 1981 (among other things, today he would be treated much better than Father Piero was then...!). Cardinal Dario Castrilllon Hoyos awaits you with open arms, to apply the "Bisig-Cure" at the right moment.

56) From this quotation we see how *La Tradizione Cattolica* presents an incomplete concept of indefectibility, limiting it to only the "*continuity in time*" of the hierarchical and visible Church. A Church which is limited to endure in time in its hierarchical structure, but which substantially alters its revealed doctrine (as in the Byzantine Church, for example) is not the true Church of Christ and is not indefectible.

57) Now, if we attentively examine the conciliar and post-conciliar documents on the one hand, and that of the Society of Saint Pius X on the other, we see how their positions approach those condemned at Pistoia: for the modernists, it is the Church of the past that 'obfuscated the face of Christ' (the children of the Church, and among them the saints, "*have disfigured her face, impeding the full reflection of the image of Our Lord Crucified*" John Paul II, *Tertio Millenio*, no. 35, see *Sodalitium*, 41, p. 16), which was the reason for which John Paul II felt compelled to ask forgiveness for the failure of that Church; for the Lefebvrians it is the Church of today (represented by Paul VI and John Paul II, and the bishops in communion with them) who have betrayed Tradition.

As we can deduce from what has been said, the indefectibility of the Church demonstrates the falsity of modernism and the falsity of Lefebrianism, certainly not the falsity of sedevacantism, at least in the position of the *Thesis of Cassiciacum* (see the note on strict

Archbishop Martin Ngo Dinh Thuc in 1962

sedevacantism and indefectibility) as we will better demonstrate in the response to objections.

58) T. ZAPELENA S.J., *De Ecclesia Christi, pars apologetica*, Roma, Università Gregoriana, 1955, p. 317: "*Ecclesia in textu evangelico exhibetur et praedicatur perpetua propter primatum*".

59) B. LUCIEN, *La situation actuelle de l'autorité dans l'Eglise*, Brussels, 1985, pp. 7-8.

60) B. LUCIEN, *op. cit.*, p. 117.

61) At least up till now. Actually, in case of an accord between John Paul II similar to that signed by Bishops Rangel and Rifan by the Apostolic Administration Saint John Mary Vianney of Campos (Brazil), one can easily predict that even the position of the Society of Saint Pius X on the Council and the Mass (like that of the Brazilians, and of those who are under the Ecclesia Dei commission) will be essentially muted.

62) On pages 24-25. To say that since Vatican Council II "Catholic Hierarchy" no longer teaches, may reassure their readers; but it is not a question of rejecting a teaching, but of noting its nonexistence while loudly shouting that the hierarchy remains with all its (unused) charisms of infallibility. In fact, the situation is very different: John Paul II and the bishops in communion with him teach almost daily, but their teaching is rejected by "traditionalists".

63) "*The conclusion that it would like to impose on us cannot coexist with the indefectibility of the Church. In effect, the absence of authority mentioned is such that leads to a suspension, for a certain time, of the powers of jurisdiction and of magisterium in the Church. During a certain time the Church would no longer be upright according to the form established by Christ, meaning that the Church would have lost one of its essential, constitutive elements, by which it would have - simply - ceased to exist*" (PIERO CANTONI, *Reflexions à propos d'une thèse récente sur la situation actuelle de l'Eglise*", pro manuscripto, May-June 1980, p.9).

64) "*If one considers the Church as a Mystical Body, Jesus remains with it even today, keeping alive the testimony of Faith and sanctification through the authentic sacraments, as pure Oblations of true Sacrifice. This is what proves the existence of those who have come to be called 'traditionalists'*" (B. LUCIEN, *La situation actuelle de l'autorité dans l'Eglise*, Brussels, 1985, p. 102). Monsignor Guérard points out that Mt XXVIII, 20 "*expressly concerns the mission equally enjoined to the Eleven*", as is typical of the power of order, in which all bishops have the same powers as the Bishop of Rome (see *Consacrer des évêques?*, Supplement to *Sous la bannière*, no. 3, January-February 1986, pp. 2 and 6): in fact in this verse, assistance is promised to all the apostles, and not to Peter alone.

65) ZAPELENA, *op. cit.*, pp. 315-316.

66) Zapelena writes again: "*...the Church, from the texts of the Evangelists, is shown to be and is called perennial due to the primacy. Therefore, the same primacy must be perpetual. Note that this argument demonstrates not so much the necessity of a succession in general, but a succession in the monarchical form. In fact, the primacy of Peter as instituted by Christ implies a supreme power of jurisdiction to which the entire ecclesial and episcopal body is subject. Now, such power would be subverted in the hypothesis of a collegial succession. In effect, Peter, through the primacy, is constituted prince of the unity and steadfastness of both the ecclessial body and the episcopal body (...) Denz. 1821*" (*op. cit.* pp. 317-318).

67) For complete reference, see *Sodalitium*, no. 55, p. 25.

68) LUCIEN, *op. cit.*, pp. 102-103 and 132.

69) In his *Tractatus de Papa* (Lecoffre, Paris-Lyon, Tome I, 1869, pp. 546-550) the Jesuit canonist Marie-Dominique Bouix (1808-1870) cites abundantly the *De potestate Papae e Concilii* by Cardinal Gerolamo Albani (1504-1591), created a Cardinal of Porta Latina by Saint Pius V in 1570, and so summarizes Albani's thesis that interests us: "*Papa factus haereticus, si resipiscat ante sententiam declaratoriam, jus Pontificium ipso facto recuperat, absque nova Cardinalium electione aliave solemnitate*" ("*The heretical Pope, if he repents before the declaring sentence, recovers the Pontificate by the fact itself, without a new election on the part of the Cardinals or any other juridical solemnity*"). I must acknowledge the text to Bishop Sanborn, with gratitude.

70) The possibility of the existence of these electors, and the material permanence of the See, is amply illustrated by LUCIEN (*op. cit.*, Chapter X), and by SANBORN (*De Papatu materiali*, second section, nn. 15-16).

71) Couldn't this also be said of simpliciter sedevacantism? I refer you to footnote 1 of this article.

72) As everyone can see, and as was repeatedly admitted by Paul VI (and his successor John Paul II). See R. AMERIO, *Iota unum*, Ricciardi, 1985, pp. 7-9.

73) "*The Church has the right to elect the pope, and therefore the right to know the elected one with certainty. As long as doubt about the election persists, and the tacit consent of the universal Church has not remedied the possible vices of the election, there is no pope, papa dubius, papa nullus. In fact, John of St. Thomas notes, as long as the peaceful and certain election is not manifest, the election itself is considered to be still in progress. And since the Church has full rights not over the certainly elected pope but over the election itself, she can take all the measures necessary for its success. The Church can therefore judge a dubious pope. It is in this way, continues John of St. Thomas, that the Council of Constance judged the three popes to be doubtful at the time, of which two were deposed and the third renounced the pontificate (II-II, qu. 1-7, a. 3, nn. 10-11; t. VII, p. 254)*" (CARDINAL CHARLES JOURNET, *L'Eglise du Verbe incarné*, Ed.

Saint Augustin, Saint Just-la-Pendue, 1998, excursus VIII: *L'élection du pape* , p. 978).

74) Zapelena, *op. cit.*, pars altera apologetico-dogmatica, p. 115. Quoted in SANBORN, *The Material Papacy*, pp. 61-63, footnote 7 (by *Sodalitium*).

75) B. LUCIEN, *Jean Madiran et la These de Cassiciacum*, in *Cahiers de Cassiciacum*, no. 5, December 1980 75 pp. 47-82, in particular p. 48 to p. 57 ("*the late character of the Thesis*"). Abbé Lucien denies "*A) Inference: that the late character of sedevacantism implies its improbability. B) Fact: that the Thesis is late. C) The value of the argument that supports it: "Can one think that God could, in regards to the Church, permit a betrayal so grave, so complete, so long lasting...? D) The reality of the fact included in this argument: the existence of a long and complete betrayal*" (p. 49).

76) Directly...In fact, to defend the legitimacy of Paul VI and John Paul II, the Society of Saint Pius X had to embrace - and all the more with the passing of time - positions that are more or less openly in contrast to defined Catholic faith. As to the legitimacy of a Pope, it is a matter of "dogmatic fact". For Marín Sola it could be an object of Divine faith.

77) See B. LUCIEN, *La situation actuelle... op. cit.*, annexe III, pp. 119-121. We read for example, "*The absence of Divinely assisted authority at the vertex of the Church (...) is assured of a certainty that belongs to Faith (...). In this case, should one say that those who recognize John Paul II (and Paul VI) as formally the Pope are not effective members of the Church, meaning they are outside the visible membership of the Church? (...) Such a conclusion would be illegitimate. We must not forget, in fact, that it is the CURRENT, living magisterium, and only it, that is Divinely instituted to authentically present all that CURRENTLY involves the object of Faith. Consequently, those who oppose our presentation of Revelation and of the doctrine of the Church do not oppose, by this fact itself, de jure, necessarily and formally, to the Magisterium of the Church itself (...)*".

78) B. LUCIEN, *La situation actuelle..., op. cit.*, Attachment I: *La légitimité du Pontife Romain, fait, dogmatique*, pp. 107-111.

79) Surprised that the TC quotes only Billot when greater weight could have been given to their own position by invoking, for example, a Doctor of the Church such as Alphonse Liguori, as Da Silveira did (p. 297) in a book that seems to be known to the TC, since they mention it (pp. 55-56). Actually, it would seem that the TC only has under its eyes the writing of Lucien (to which, however, it does not explicitly allude), who precisely speaks of the "thesis of Cardinal Billot"...

80) We notice how this "unanimous consensus of theologians", so valued by the TC, is however cheerfully despised regarding unwelcome opinions, such as on the Pope's infallibility in canonizations. [See *L'infallibilità del Papa e la canonizzazione dei Santi*, in *Sodalitium*, 54, pp. 4-5].

81) A. X. VIDIGAL DA SILVEIRA, *La nouvelle messe de Paul VI: qu'en penser*?, ed. francese: DPF, Chiré, 1975, pp. 298-299.

82) For the historical context of the Bull, see *Sodalitium* no. 36, December 1993 - January 1994 (F. Ricossa, 82 "*Heresy at the Vertex of the Church" (M. Firpo)...in the XVI century; the incredible history of Cardinal Morone*). [And, more recent: *La Bolla "Cum ex apostolatus officio" di Papa Paolo IV. Noterelle storiche*, in *Sodalitium*, 70-71, pp. 22-30].

83) LUCIEN, *La situation..., op. cit.*, p. 111.

84) I also note that the argument adopted by the TC is very dangerous. The consensus of Bishops - as I recall - was the argument used by Abbé de Nantes to accept the legitimacy and legality of the New Mass, an argument later taken up by Dom Gérard. It is not clear why the so-called Bishops would be infallible in recognizing the Pope, and not infallible in accepting the Novus Ordo Missae. The same argument would be valid for the acceptance, morally unanimous, of Vatican II. The logic of the anonymous author of the TC should lead him irrefutably to the acceptance of the Council and the New Mass.

85) LUCIEN, *La situation..., op. cit.*, p. 111.

86) P. Basilio Meramo, member of the Priestly Society of Saint Pius X, *Consideracion teologica sobre la Sede Vacante*, Madrid, Epiphany 1994: "*the formula of the putative Pope comes from Msgr. de Castro Mayer: it was he himself who told me in 1989 in the seminar of La Reja when I asked him what he thought about the Pope and the Sede Vacante. He told me categorically: a heretic cannot be Pope, and this Pope is a heretic*" (p. 42). For Monsignor de Castro Mayer, John Paul II was not Pope, but Christ could make up only for those acts of the "putative pope" that were "*in favor of the common good of the Church and the salvation of souls*" (*ibidem*).

87) To the point that, if Abbé de Nantes is to be believed, Father Guérard des Lauriers considered that the conclusion that "the See is vacant" was evident "without conjecture" (that is, without making true and proper reasoning) and this was precisely in response to the objection by Abbé de Nantes himself based on the fact that the sedevacantist position was only a "private judgment". See Frère François, *op. cit.*, vol. III, pp. 110. Abbé de Nantes is more consistent (at least in theory) than the TC and the Society of Saint Pius X, who, arguing that since John Paul II is still Pope, one must obey him in all disciplinary matters.

88) Medieval theological thought has always admitted that the Primal See (papal) cannot be judged by any other authority, except in the case of heresy. Theologians of the Counter Reformation have tried to explain how this exception would not be a true exception, for which even in the case of heresy, the Council could not truly judge a Pope. To the supporters of the thesis according to which the heretical Pope is not

yet deposed, but should be by a Council, the Bishops would not have the power of judgment or deposition over the Pope, but only over the union between the papacy and such a person (this is the Thesis of Cajetan). Saint Robert Bellarmine, who judged this thesis insufficient to guarantee the fact that the Primal See cannot be judged by anyone, maintained that the heretical Pope is deposed by God, and when the Council judges him, he is no longer Pope. In the case hypothesized by Paul IV and Saint Pius V (the election of a heretical pope) the 'pope' in question would never have been such, and then could very well be judged by the Church. The same reasoning holds for the 'dubious pope' (and we saw it taken from a quote by John of Saint Thomas by Journet): he could be judged because he is not Pope. We see, therefore, in each case the axiom (in itself sacrosanct) brought up by the TC ("the Primal See can be judged by no one') cannot be used against the sedevacantist hypotheses.

89) See *Prise de position du district Suisse de la Fraternité Saint Pie X sur les évènements de Riddes*. Riddes is the parish in which the Ecône seminary is located. Its pastor, Fr. Epiney, collaborated for a long time with the Society. Due to this collaboration, he was deprived of the parish. In 2001, Abbé Grenon, a priest who left the Society, was welcomed as the new pastor. The Superior of the district, Pfluger, supported by the Superior General, Bishop Fellay (an ex-parishioner of Fr. Epiney) declared that Abbé Grenon, no longer being incardinated into the society, could not celebrate Mass, and that if he celebrated it, it is "*an illicit mass that does not bestow the merits of grace*". The faithful were instructed to avoid the Mass of this parish priest as well. In his communiqué, the district superior invokes for the Society the power of jurisdiction, the fact of being sent by Christ, that obedience is owed to him ("*Whoever listens to you listens to me, whoever rejects you despises me*" Lk 10:16). The same communiqué of January 2002 affirms that the pastor, incardinated actually to the diocese of Sion, is compelled to be "*submissive to the decisions [of the Society] (i.e. to those of episcopal authority)*" of Bishop Fellay and not of the diocesan Bishop. The communiqué in question is most serious, and configures the Society like a true parallel and schismatic church.

90) Although off topic, it seemed to me an opportunity to respond, at least in a footnote, as to what the TC has written on the consecrations without Roman Mandate by Archbishop Thuc. The TC publishes on pp. 44-45 a not-exhaustive list of consecrations that have Archbishop Thuc as their origin (sometimes a very distant origin), a list that includes 43 names, of which 10 were consecrated directly by Archbishop Thuc. I think in this regard the consecrations attributable to Archbishop Thuc concern only three acts performed by him: the consecration on January 12, 1976 at Palmar de Troya (5 Bishops), the one at Toulon on May 7, 1981 (Bishop Guérard des Lauriers), and that of Tolone on October 17, 1981 (Bishops Zamora and Carmona). However, we must exclude the supposed and not at all proven ones of Laborie and Datassen (wrongly designated by the TC, p. 47, as head of the *Union of Petites Eglises*); Archbishop Thuc has never officially recognized these consecrations, which in any case would have been only the "conditional" consecrations of persons already consecrated and therefore who have not really received the episcopate from him. If this is the case, 21 "bishops" must be subtracted from the list published by the TC: in reality they have nothing to do with Archbishop Thuc. Further, we must subtract the five bishops of Palmar with their dubious ancestry, as they have nothing to do with sedevacantism: in Palmar, as in Ecône, they believed in the legitimacy of Paul VI (and the one who convinced Bishop Thuc to go to Palmar was a professor of Ecône, Canon Rivaz). The consecrations of Guérard des Lauriers, Zamora and Carmona, on the other hand, were carried out on the basis of the (at least formal) vacancy of the Apostolic See, as publicly declared in 1982, and as John Paul II and Card. Ratzinger perfectly understood, uniting in official acts both the consecrations in question and the declaration of Sede Vacante.

91) *Sodalitium* does not deny Archbishop Thuc's defects, and can partly share in the judgment that was brought upon him by the TC. However, let us remind our opponents of the words of the Gospel about the beam and the straw. The TC rebukes Archbishop Thuc for, among other things, a) The consecrations of Palmar de Troya; b) The consecration of two "old catholics"; c) The fact that among the bishop's so-called descendants, there are even gnostics; d) The "discontinuity" of Thuc's positions; e) The "heterogeneity of the consecrated"; f) The doubts of some regarding the validity of his consecrations. We respond, *medice, cura te ipsum* [physician, heal thyself]. Let's briefly look at the points indicated.

A) The episcopal consecration at Palmar de Troya (using the traditional rite, and through a traditional Mass) took place, for example, in an "apparitionist" framework, which cannot but discredit the person of Archbishop Thuc; then, how could he have trusted false seers? It happened to Archbishop Lefebvre and to Bishop de Castro Mayer as well. I certainly do not want to deny the faith and seriousness of these two great prelates, yet they too had weaknesses. Bishop de Castro Mayer, for example, for the longest time followed Professor Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira, founder of the T.F.P., a man of great culture and profound doctrinal preparation, but who was also idolized as a 'guru' by his followers in the atmosphere of a true 'sect', as the prelate himself later denounced. Archbishop Lefebvre, although a skeptic regarding 'apparitions', did not fail to rely on visionaries, even for very important choices: even his biographer, Tissier, writes about the influence of Claire Ferchaud, of Marthe Robin and of the "apparitions" of Saint Damian (pp. 455, 433, 479). The

group of loyal Valais proprietors at Ecône followed the apparitions of San Damiano and the seer of Fribourg, Elaine Gaille (recently, the Italian district [of the Society] receives the profit of San Damiano). In Italy, the author of the TC had to be perfectly aware of what happened in Rimini, where the priorate of the Society was founded in agreement with the faithful of "Mamma Elvira", a false seer to whom Archbishop Lefebvre gave his full support. In this case, can one claim that the good accomplished by the prior of Rimini (including various priestly vocations) did not come from God because Mamma Elvira was not a "Woman of Providence"? Apparitionism in the Society is not just about its origins: Bishop Fellay, Superior General of the Society of Saint Pius X, recognized the work of a seer, a Germaine Rossinière (pseudonym) "*a woman of heaven*" and "*a treasure of grace*" who was officially presented in an internal edition of *Cor Unum* (a supplement to no. 60, June 1998). Only a few examples among many that can be cited...

B) Archbishop Thuc is accused of contacts with the "old catholics". I myself saw at Ecône an "old catholic" bishop welcomed back into the Church by Archbishop Lefebvre (as Archbishop Thuc had done for his part); a priest and religious who married and became a schismatic Greek priest, only to then return to the lay state, and teach at Ecône, etc.

C) Archbishop Thuc was surely not responsible for the consecrations of some Guenonians who received the episcopate (?) pretending to have received the episcopate from him. Archbishop Lefebvre, rather, is certainly responsible for the ordinations of more than one Guenonian (therefore, Gnostic), after having been forewarned prior to their ordination precisely about this fact. I am convinced that Archbishop Lefebvre had nothing to do with these doctrines, but he certainly was imprudent in these ordinations.

D) As to the "discontinuity of Thuc's positions (oscillating between sedevacantism and reconciliation with the Vatican)" (TC, p. 47), let us recall the oscillations of Archbishop Lefebvre between a possible sedevacantism, traditionalism, and reconciliation with the Vatican; to the point that he signed and then retracted the agreement protocol.

E) Let's move on to "the heterogeneity of the consecrated" (TC, p. 47). Archbishop Lefebvre ordained excellent priests as well as – unfortunately – scandalous priests; in some cases being aware, unfortunately, of moral defects that are decisive for refusing ordination to such candidates. However, the sad case of a priest who first made an attempt on the life of John Paul II and then abandoned the priesthood could not have been foreseen (for other sad details, see his autobiography). If this poor priest had been ordained by Archbishop Thuc, what would the priests of the Society have written (and even worse said)? Wouldn't that have been proof of Archbishop Thuc's insanity? Unfortunately, the Bishop who ordained that unfortunate man was Monsignor Lefebvre (and I don't cast blame on him, since he could not have foreseen the future).

F) Finally, the TC casts doubt on the mental health of Monsignor Thuc and the validity of his consecrations. The "*well-founded doubt*" (p. 47) is based on the oscillations of Archbishop Thuc, on the "heterogeneity" of his consecrations; doubts raised by third parties... We have seen that the same charges (albeit in a different way) could also be made against Archbishop Lefebvre, and in fact there are those who have denied the validity of his ordinations and consecrations. In *Sodalitium*, I absolutely denied this inconsistent thesis. The TC should equally deny the inconsistent thesis that places doubt on the validity of the consecrations and ordinations of Archbishop Thuc, if only for consistency with what the Society itself did in accepting the validity of the priesthood of Abbé Schaeffer, ordained by Archbishop Thuc in 1981. When it comes to having one more priest, Archbishop Thuc's orders are valid; when it comes to dissuading the faithful from receiving Confirmation from a bishop who received the episcopate from Archbishop Thuc, then such orders are invalid or doubtful... Where is the coherence and good faith? To conclude, I certainly don't claim to be better than others, nor do I claim that our Institute is immune from blame or reproach. I don't even wish to compare Archbishop Lefebvre to Archbishop Thuc; the predominant role is clear, the greater importance goes to the French prelate; however, the Society cannot only highlight what honors its founder, and systematically hide what may be less honorable, or might damage his figure as a "Man of Providence". We invite the TC to be more sincere, or to give up basing its arguments on the presumed sanctity of its members and the presumed or real unworthiness of its opponents.

The "Thesis of Cassiciacum" in question. A response to "*La Tour de David*" and "*Le sel de la terre*".

Father Francesco Ricossa

From the time of its birth, the "Thesis of Cassiciacum" (that is, the theological thesis of Father Guérard des Lauriers on the current situation of authority in the Church endorsed by our magazine) has aroused lively discussion and numerous articles, especially by authors of other '*traditionalist*' theses. Over the past 25 years nothing has changed, and the magazine *Sodalitium* is often at the center of the discussion.

In this article I would like to examine two writings that were published last year against the Thesis. The first was published by Abbé Grossin in his magazine *La tour de David* (no. 14, March-April 2002, pp. 1-6) with the title *La Thèse guérardienne n'existe pas*; the second is the work of Dominicus in response to our no. 52 of *Sodalitium* (French edition; n. 53 in Italian), and was published by the theological magazine of the Dominicans of Avrillé, *Le sel de la Terre* (n. 41, summer 2002, pp. 234-242) with the title *Réponse à Sodalitium*.

Our contradictors oppose our thesis from two opposing and irreconcilable points of view: for Abbé Grossin, John Paul II is absolutely not Pope, neither materially nor formally; for Dominicus he is (probably) Pope absolutely, materially and formally; for *Sodalitium* he is not Pope formally, but he is still "pope" materially. However, Dominicus cites Abbé Grossin several times in support of his position against the *Thesis of Cassiciacum*, therefore we can affirm that, on many points, the position of our opponents coincides.

Many years have now passed since the opponents of the Second Vatican Council divided into various schools opposed to each other, and in truth everything has already been said for or against the different positions. We will therefore not give, on this occasion, a general and exhaustive exposition of the "*Thesis of Cassiciacum*" (there is no lack of material on the subject), but we will limit ourselves only to responding to the arguments of our objectors.

We do it *sine ira et studio*, without passion that could distract us from the sincere search and defense of the truth, ready to sacrifice any point of our position that does not conform to the doctrine of the Catholic Church.

FIRST PART: RESPONSE TO A COMMON OBJECTION BY ABBE GROSSIN AND THE DOMINICANS OF AVRILLE

In Abbé Grossin's short article we counted about twenty objections to which we can respond, demonstrating their inconsistencies. Among these, however, there is one which undoubtedly is the main one: the very title of the article is inspired by it (*The Guérardian Thesis does not exist*); the magazine of the Dominicans of Avrillé, *Le Sel de la terre* (n. 41, p. 238, n. 1) reports and takes up the sedevacantist objection. Let's examine it.

Abbé Grossin wants to refute the Thesis of Cassiciacum by reducing it to the absurd (point 2), noting internal contradictions in it. The Thesis would therefore be contradictory, absurd, non-existent. The contradiction reported in point 2b is the following: for the thesis "*the occupant of the Apostolic See is at the same time capable and incapable of the form of the pontificate, he can*

be and cannot be pope". Let's look at the argument: "*Father Guérard stated in the Cahiers de Cassiciacum, n°1, p. 39: '(Paul VI) is incapable of exercising pontifical power, because he is no longer a 'subject' who is metaphysically 'capable of it''. If the subject Paul VI cannot receive authority, he cannot be compared to suitable matter (capable of) receiving the form of pope. A material pope is one necessarily and metaphysically capable of receiving the form of the Pontificate. If he is not suitable, he is nothing, and not a material pope. It follows that for Father G. and the School of the Thesis, the occupant of the Apostolic See is at the same time capable and incapable of the form of the supreme pontificate, which can be and cannot be pope. Which is obviously absurd. Cassiciacum's gratuitous hypothesis proves nothing and says nothing, since the absurd is nothing. The imaginary Cassiciacum hypothesis does not exist!*" (hence the title of the aforementioned article: *The Guérardian Thesis does not exist*).

We respond by reminding Abbé Grossin (and the Dominicans of Avrillé) of the principle of non-contradiction: *"the same predicate cannot be affirmed and denied of the same subject at the same time and from the same point of view"*. Now, according to Thesis of Cassiciacum, Paul VI was (John Paul II is) incapable and capable of being Pope at the same time, but not from the same point of view. Therefore there is no contradiction in the Thesis.

Let's explain. Without doubt for our Thesis, Paul VI was and was not capable of being Pope: he was, because he was Pope materially, with the potency to become Pope; he was not, because he was not Pope formally, not being able to receive Authority from Christ. Abbé Grossin objects: if he was able to become Pope, he was able to, and therefore capable of, receiving Authority from Christ. While the thesis states the opposite. In short: was Paul VI capable of receiving the Authority or not?

We answer: he was capable *remoto obice*, had he removed the obstacle that prevented him from receiving the Authority, secus, otherwise, he was not. And let us remember that the obstacle *(obex)* for the thesis is not unproven formal heresy, but the absence of the objective and habitual intention of realizing the good/end of the Church.

An example will help readers and contradictors to understand [(1)]. An adult requests baptism, sincerely desiring to receive the sacrament. However, he retains an affection for mortal sin. We ask ourselves: is he a subject for (capable of) receiving sanctifying grace? The answer will be – for Abbé Grossin and the Dominicans of Avrillé – contradictory: he is and is not capable of receiving grace! He is not capable of this from the point of view of the voluntary obstacle (the affection for sin) that he places in the way to the reception of grace, an obstacle incompatible with grace. He is still capable of grace, however, because he is capable of receiving baptism (before the ceremony) and still capable of receiving grace (after baptism), removing the obstacle, the affection for sin. And after the baptism, this man both is and is not in his earlier state: he is in the same state regarding grace and forgiveness of sins, which he did not receive; he is not in his earlier state as to the character and to being a Christian, which he instead received. The example of a marriage rendered invalid by an impediment but which can become valid once this impediment has been removed would lead us to the same conclusion [(2)]. Are these people married? Materially yes, formally no. Are they capable of even being formally married? If they remove the obstacle yes, until they remove it no.

In our case Paul VI was a subject suitable for the papacy (he was materially pope) as a man, male, baptized, whose formal heresy and subsequent exclusion from the Church had not been demonstrated. He was a matter close to the papacy as he was elected to the pontificate. He was unable to receive Authority because of the obstacle posed by his lack of intention. An obstacle that could have been removed, formally making him Pope,

precisely because he was otherwise capable of being Pope.

The difference therefore between Abbé Grossin's sedevacantism and ours on this point is this: for Abbé Grossin, Paul VI was radically incapable of being elected Pope; for us he was capable of being elected Pope, but not of receiving papal Authority, due to an obstacle he placed in the way of his receiving the Authority from God. A position - ours - which is certainly different from that of Abbé Grossin, but surely not contradictory.

Therefore, Abbé Grossin's main objection, endorsed by the magazine *Le sel de la terre*, is without merit: the Thesis of Cassiciacum... exists!

SECOND PART: RESPONSE TO OTHER OBJECTIONS BY ABBE GROSSIN

We responded to the main objection of the magazine *La tour de David*, published by Abbé Grossin. Let us now look at the minor difficulties, of unequal importance, raised by our contradictor. We will follow Abbé Grossin's text step by step.

First objection (1, p. 1): "*Father Guérard based his entire thesis on the heretical Declaration on Religious Freedom*" without mentioning the other conciliar texts. As a consequence of this, it was enough for his disciples, Lucien and de Blignières to change their position on religious freedom and join the "*formal sect of Vatican II*", driven by the "*belief in the "material Church of Vatican II*".

Response. 1) That Father Guérard principally based the deductive proof of his thesis on the conciliar declaration on religious freedom, I grant. Exclusively, I deny.

And I prove it. From its very beginning the proof was founded on liturgical reform [3]. Subsequently, his disciples themselves - with his help - published the *Lettre à quelques évêques* [4]... containing the critical analysis of the most varied errors of John Paul II and the Second Vatican Council. Now, the *Lettre...*, addressed to the Bishops, was a first step to obtain from them a canonical admonition to John Paul II.

2) That Father Guérard based the inductive proof of his Thesis only on religious freedom, I absolutely deny. The inductive proof (Paul VI is not formally Pope because he does not have the usual intention of objectively procuring the good/end of the Church) is in fact based on all the acts of Paul VI and John Paul II judged incompatible with this intention: this is what all "traditionalists" unanimously affirm.

3) Therefore, the disciples of Father Guérard who joined Vatican II did so for reasons unrelated to the Thesis itself. There was no shortage of sedevacantists who abandoned their position to adhere to the

Father Michel Guérard des Lauriers

Council (or join the Society); yet they did not believe in material succession in episcopal seats.

4) There does not exist - and we do not believe in the existence - of a "*material Church of Vatican II*"; even less does the "*formal Vatican II sect*" exist. If it existed, Abbé Grossin would have been - repeatedly - part of it; no one told us who welcomed him into the Catholic Church, by accepting his recantations and absolving him from the censures he incurred...!

Second objection. (pp. 1-5; 2c): "*the name Pope does not suit the material Pope (...) yet Father Guérard persisted in calling Paul VI: 'our Pontiff'. See Cahier de Cassiciacum n°1, p. 36*".

Response. The objection is divided into two parts. As for the first, it is appropriate to call the Conclave's elect "material pope". For Abbé Grossin this is inconvenient, since, he writes (p. 4): "*the cardinal elected by the Conclave is a cardinal and nothing else*". In reality, the cardinal elected by the Conclave is not in the same situation as the cardinals who were not elected: they are remote matter while he is proximate matter to the supreme pontificate! And as long as he is in this situation of being elected and not yet Pope (a situation for which no maximum expiry time is determined) [(5)], he is the only one who can be designated to the Pontificate, to the exclusion of any other subject. He therefore has what Cajetan and Belarmine consider the material element of the papacy. He can therefore be called – speculatively – "papa materialiter". Can he also be called "our Pontiff"? (this is the second point of the objection). Anyone who knows the supporters of the Thesis knows that in our writings and in our speeches we never attribute to John Paul II (or Cardinal Wojtyla, as Father Guérad always wrote) the title of Pope or "our Pontiff". The quote from Father Guérard, constantly and polemically repeated by Abbé Grossin, in which John Paul II is defined as "our Pontiff", was only used at the beginning, and abandoned, we believe, to avoid confusion.

Upon closer inspection, however, any confusion was already sufficiently avoided by Father Guérard from the beginning because - in n. 1 of the *Cahiers de Cassiciacum* cited and contested by Abbé Grossin - the Dominican theologian specifies and clarifies the terminology he used. On pp. 21-22 of the *Cahiers* (pages that Abbé Grossin is careful not to cite) Father Guérard specifies that he introduces a distinction between the term Pope, which he attributes to the Pope simpliciter, the one who is the formal Pope, the one who holds the Authority, and the term "pope", to indicate the occupant of the Apostolic See, "the authority" metaphysically incapable of exercising Authority. Similarly, on p. 36, he specifies that "*it is in this sense, but in this sense only, we will explain that Paul VI is 'our Pontiff'*". Abbé Grossin is very free to adopt another terminology. But he cannot attribute to the terminology adopted by Father Guérard a meaning that he does not give it, or indeed, one that he explicitly rejects.

Third objection. "*Father Guérard, while he considers the arguments in favor of Paul VI's heresy impressive, rejects them without even examining them*" (1°, pp. 1-2).

Response. Father Guérard does not examine the topics in question because he perfectly agrees that Paul VI and John Paul II "habitually teach heresy". This observation, however, does not authorize one to deduce that they are "formally heretics". Abbé Grossin does not even mention the classic distinction accepted by all theologians between "material heresy" (a proposition contrary to faith) and formal heresy (i.e. pertinacity of will, consisting in opposition to the teaching of the Church). Observation of a material heresy is not yet sufficient to reach the "rigorous certainty" of the formal heresy of its author. Abbé Grossin confuses a heretical doctrine with the sin of heresy: we refer him to what has already been written on this question [(6)].

This is perhaps – let us point it out en passant – the main mistake of the sedevacantists who oppose the Thesis.

Fourth objection. Father Guérard (*CdC*, n. 1, note 21, p. 36) would evade "*the principal question of the debate*", that which concerns the conditions of the juridical loss of the pontificate by Paul VI (and successors). He thus avoids all the thorny issues that could compromise the Thesis... (1°, p. 2).

Response. That Father Guérard does not speak of these modalities in the passage cited does not imply that he does not speak about them elsewhere, or that this question is "*thorny*" or "*compromising*" for our position! In fact these methods have been extensively explained. John Paul II would legally lose his (material) pontificate after a finding of his formal heresy by the imperfect General Council (residential bishops) or possibly by the College of Cardinals, who, to proceed with this finding, would have to previously warn John Paul II of his errors and invite him to retract them.

Fifth objection. In the history of the Church there have never been material popes: this is an unprecedented novelty. However, there have been antipopes and usurpers. Saint Bernard did not recognize the antipope Anacletus II "*material pope by right, under the pretext that he was legally elected and accepted by the cardinals*" but "*on the contrary, with Saint Norbert, he launched the Catholic armies against the usurper to rid the Church of a usurper!*" (1b, p. 2).

Response. The Dominicans of Avrillé say they do not agree with this objection of Abbé Grossin, with whom they share the theological [(7)] lefebvrian traditionalism. Our contradictors forget two essential differences between our situation and those of the past. The first is that in the past members of the hierarchy intervened immediately when faced with the possible errors of other members of the hierarchy (or even of the Pope, as in the case of John XXII). In the current situation, no member of the teaching Church has intervened to question the legitimacy of Paul VI, John Paul I or John Paul II. The second difference is that Anacletus II (like all the antipopes) was elected by some cardinals against the legitimate Pope already elected. Tell us, Abbé Grossin, who is the legitimate Pope after the antipopes Paul VI and his successors? (as for Catholic armies, Abbé Grossin, like a new Saint Bernard, can launch them against Saint Peter's, if he could ever manage to find them).

THIRD PART: RESPONSE TO THE OTHER OBJECTIONS, BY "LE SEL DE LA TERRE"

Let us now move on, briefly, to the objections proper to the Dominican magazine.

First objection. Knowing whether John Paul II is Pope or not Pope is a secondary question (p. 234). Archbishop Lefebvre often said that if we are offered poison, our duty is not to drink it (p. 234, note 2). Therefore God asks us to adopt a "prudential position", which consists in recognizing John Paul II as Pope, and at the same time "resisting him to his face" as Saint Paul did towards Saint Peter (Gal 2, 11-14) (pp. 234, 241, note 2).

Response. I have already responded to this objection in the article on the Dossier of the Tradizione Cattolica ("*Part II: the 'real problem' and the solution proposed by Tradizione Cattolica*"). Obviously, we must not drink poison even if the pharmacist or our own father administers it to us (this was Monsignor Lefebvre's favorite example). The fact is that the Pope cannot give us poison, as he is divinely assisted (DS 3070-3071). As for the case of Saint Peter, I *nego paritatem [deny parity, tr.]*. Saint Paul did not resist a teaching of Saint Peter, or his legislation, etc., but only reproached him for a practical approach, which Saint Peter immediately and humbly corrected. There is no comparison to

that of Paul VI and John Paul II, of whom are rejected: a) the magisterium b) canonical and liturgical legislation c) solemn canonizations.

Second objection. The "materialiter" hierarchy, deprived of form (authority and divine assistance) is a hypothesis contrary to the indefectibility of the Church (pp. 236-237, point 2); for example, at this moment there would not be an infallible magisterium, contrary to the divine promises (p. 238).

Response. I have already responded to this objection too by replying to *La Tradizione Cattolica* (see the entire fourth part). In short: when the see is vacant (for example, upon the death of the Pope) the Church is deprived of the infallible magisterium in act (Bishops without the Pope are not infallible) and yet the promises of Jesus Christ have not ceased.

Third objection. "*The 'material pope' of the Thesis of Cassiciacum poses a philosophical problem. In fact, the 'material pope' does not have jurisdiction (because he does not have authority), but he still has a little (because he can carry out valid acts, such as appointing cardinals)*" (p. 237).

Response. I deny. The "material pope" has no jurisdiction. When he appoints cardinals (or diocesan bishops) he does not exercise the power of jurisdiction, as *Le Sel de la terre* knows well, which writes in fact : "*It is true that the partisans of the Thesis of Cassiciacum distinguish two objects: the right to legislate and the right to designate (which the Church continues to possess in the event of vacancy of the seat). The pope would be deprived of the first right (and therefore of the form of the papacy) but would retain the second (as he would govern the Church in the name of the conclave)*" (p. 237) [8]. **Instance:** "*On the other hand, Bishop Sanborn grants the current pope 'the right to change the rules of the election especially if these changes are accepted by the conclave' (p. 65). But these rules are promulgated in the form of law, in the fullness of the apostolic power of the Pope".* And *Le Sel de la terre* cites, as proof of this statement, the Constitution *Vacante sede Apostolica* of Saint Pius X of 25 December 1904 and concludes*: "it is not clear how these laws could be modified by those who do not possess the fullness of power apostolic*" (pp. 237-238).

Response. Since *Le Sel de la terre* calls into question Bishop Sanborn, we asked him for a draft response which we publish, translated from Latin: "*We admit that Wojtyla has the power to 'appoint' or 'designate' legitimately. The power to designate is not jurisdiction, since it does not concern the purpose of the law, which is the good of the Church, but only the designation of those who are to receive jurisdiction. Now, the rules of papal election belong to the order of designation, and not to the order of jurisdiction. The faithful must only give the designations made by Wojtyla 'recognition' (agnoscere), not due 'obedience' (oboedire). To the Law, however, strictly speaking, we owe 'obedience'. The Law, by its nature, is directed towards the good to be done and the evil to be avoided. Now, whoever has the power to designate also has the power to change the rules of designation, since these rules are ordered to this specific end. Wojtyla can, for example, change the rules for appointing bishops.*

Objection: 'Saint Pius X made a real law'. I answer: Saint Pius X made a real law because Saint Pius X had both the power to designate and the power to legislate. Thus, there was no need to distinguish between the right to designate and the right to legislate. However, the matter of this law of Saint Pius X does not [directly] concern the proper purpose of the law, which is the common good of the Church, but only the way of designating the Pope.

The power to designate (right to elect, right to designate) belongs to power properly ecclesiastical. Jurisdiction (the right to legislate) belongs to Christ, of whom the true Pope is only vicar. Therefore it is possible (although the case is very rare) that these two powers or rights, which are really different since they come from two really different sources, are separated in fact, and that the

'pope' only materialiter can only make valid designations, without however having pontifical jurisdiction. In other words, the designation of 'such or another' person to receive jurisdiction, and the way of designating, are indifferent things with regard to the good of the Church. But whether the Bishops and the Pope are designated is not an indifferent thing, but belongs to the essence and continuity of the Church.

Laws concerning faith, or liturgy or discipline, are real laws, because they necessarily belong to the ends of the Church, which is the salvation of souls. Over them, Wojtyla has no power, since he 'habitually' and 'universally' intends ends that contradict the Church's own ends, that is, [he intends] heresies, errors, sinful disciplines. He therefore poses an obstacle to receiving power from Christ, the Head of the Church. Instead, the power to designate is a properly ecclesiastical power, and it is not necessary that the one who has this power be the Vicar of Christ.

For this same reason theologians affirm that, in the absence of Cardinals, the General Council can designate the Pope, which would be impossible if the rules of designation depended on the authority of Christ, possessed by the Pope in a vicarious manner. In the case cited, the bishops (with jurisdiction!) change the rules of designation. While a General Council cannot, without the Pope, make the laws properly so called".

Subsequently, Bishop Sanborn added the following:

"*In other words:*

The right to legislate is a faculty. Faculties are specified by their object. Now, the object of the law is the common good.

The right to designate is also a faculty. The object of the right to designate is the designation of persons who receive the right to legislate. This object is really different from the right to legislate, since someone can possess the designation without possessing the jurisdiction.

Not only are these two objects truly distinct, but they are also separable.

They are truly distinct, because they come from two truly different sources: the right to legislate properly belongs to the authority of Christ, which is possessed vicariously by the Pope. The power to designate, however, is a properly ecclesiastical power, which is properly possessed by the Church, although it was granted to it by Christ".

As I have already said, this explanation is exhaustive. If this were not the case, Christ could make up for an invalid designation, as long as it is based at least on a "coloured'" (apparent) title, as supported - in an equivalent way - by authors such as Zapelena, Billuart, Saenz, Castro Mayer etc.

Fourth objection. *Le sel de la terre* insists in saying that "*the conciliar teaching is not infallible because it is not imposed with sufficient authority*"; they are modernists who "*no longer have the idea of an immutable truth*" and "*who cannot teach something as if it had to be believed forever*" (p. 239). Thus they explain the fact that the ordinary and universal magisterium (pp. 239-240) of the bishops united with John Paul II, the liturgical laws (new mass, etc.) and disciplinary laws (new code, etc.) and the canonizations (p. 239), which should all be guaranteed by infallibility, are in reality null and invalid because "*they are not for the common good of the Church*" (p. 241, note 2). The proof of what has been said consists in the fact that the Vatican authorities did not ask the clergy of Campos to accept religious freedom in order to be readmitted to full communion (p. 240).

Response. I can only reiterate what I wrote in no. 52 (French ed.) of *Sodalitium*, where I demonstrated 1) that John Paul II intends to teach and legislate with authority, 2) that Paul VI imposed the Council and the new mass. *Le sel de la terre* did not respond to these arguments. The example of Campos proves nothing, since the clergy of the new "Apostolic Administration" accepted Vatican II and therefore, implicitly, religious freedom. If then what *Le Sel de la terre* and *Tradizione Cattolica* say were true, it would only confirm our Thesis: Paul VI and John Paul II,

modernists (therefore heretics) in the strict sense of the word, who habitually act against the good of the Church, cannot be the authority of the Church.

The spite of *Le sel de la terre*. For the sake of justice, we cannot include in the objections some barbs from *Le sel de la terre*. At two points (p. 239 and 240) Dominicus writes as if *Sodalitium* were guilty of ignorance by quoting two authors (Bishop Zinelli and Pope Gregory XVI) second hand, and therefore misunderstanding their thoughts. As for Bishop Zinelli, in Verrua too we have the Mansi collection, and the citation made by Abbé Lucien is entirely *ad rem*, although in context the topic treated *ex professo* is another. As for the quotation from Gregory XVI, I fear that *Le Sel de la terre* has consulted, like me initially, only the summary given by the monks of Solesmes; they would have realized that it is not an encyclical but a brief, and that actually (when reading an Italian translation, and certainly not the French text of the *Insegnamenti Pontifici*) the interpretation that Avrillé gave to it is possible. I therefore had to resort to the original Latin text, which confirms my thesis (and that of Father Cantoni) and denies Dominicus' version [(9)]. And rightly so: in fact, if - as also supported by Dominicus - the Church cannot permit a bad thing (it is not licit for Her), then in the same way She cannot (it is not licit for Her, as She is divinely assisted) allow it in fact [(10)]. In denying this, Dominicus again cites the case of St. Peter and the incident at Antioch (p. 241); I repeat that Saint Peter did not teach or legislate badly, but in practice behaved in an ambiguous manner, albeit for a good purpose. Included among the mischief of Dominicus I must however - as with the *Tradizione Cattolica* - mention what was written on episcopal consecrations (p. 242). Dominicus goes so far as to mischievously allude to the sad case of Bishop Munari. I wrote to the Avrillé convent complaining about the fact: his personal choices do not demonstrate the falsity of our position, just as the numerous abandonments of priests of the Society of Saint Pius X did not demonstrate the falsity of Archbishop Lefevbre's position. I didn't get any response. Sometimes those who are short of arguments have to use bad arguments.

Footnotes

1) See *Cahiers de Cassiciacum*, no. 1, p. 24.

2) See H. BELMONT, *L'esercizio quotidiano della fede*, published by the author, Bordeaux, 1984, p. 25; B. LUCIEN, *La situation actuelle de l'autorité dans l'Eglise*, Brussels, 1985, p. 61 footnote 69; F. RICOSSA, *Don Paladino e la Tesi di Cassiciacum*, CLS, Verrua Savoia, pp. 11-12.

3) See *Cahiers de Cassiciacum*, suppl. no. 2, pp. 5, 8- 10. Abbé de Nantes published the letters of Fr. Guérard from 1969 in which he deduced, from the promulgation of the N.O.M., that Paul VI was not the pope.

4) *Lettre à quelques évêques sur la situation de la Sainte Eglise ...*, Société Saint-Thomas-d'Aquin, Paris, 1983.

5) St. Pius X prescribes: "*After the canonically made election, the Cardinal Dean, on behalf of the entire Sacred College, requests the consent of the elected. Once consent has been given* ***within a term to be determined - if necessary - according to the prudent judgment of the Cardinals - by majority of votes*** *-, the elected person is immediately the true Pope, and obtains and can exercise in act full and absolute jurisdiction over all the earth*" (Constitution *Vacante Sede Apostolica* of 24 December 1904, nos. 87-88). Ecclesiastical law, therefore, does not provide for a specific time between election and acceptance.

6) Expounded at length by Father Guérard and summarized by Abbé Lucien in chap. VII of his Thesis essay.

7) For this expression, see *Sodalitium*, no. 53, pp. 10-11, in my first response to *Le Sel de la terre*.

8) The last words of the sentence, placed in brackets, are meaningless and do not reflect our position.

9) The *Insegnamenti Pontifici* edited by the monks of Solesmes thus cite the **encyclical** *Quo graviora* (*La Chiesa*, vol. 1, n. 173): in French: "*Est-ce que l'Eglise qui est la colonne et le soutient de la verité et qui manifestement reçoit sans cesse de l'Esprit-Saint l'enseignement de toute vérité, pourrait ordonner, accorder, permettre* ***ce qui*** *tournerait au détriment du salut des âmes, et au mépris at au dommage d'un sacrement institué par le Christ?*"; in Italian they cite as following: "*La Chiesa, che è la colonna e il sostegno della verità e che manifestamente riceve di continuo dallo Spirito Santo l'insegnamento di ogni verità, non può comandare, né concedere, né permettere* ***una cosa***

che sia a detrimento della salute delle anime, o che torni a disprezzo o a danno di un sacramento istituito da Gesù Cristo" ["The Church, which is the pillar and support of the truth and which manifestly continuously receives the teaching of every truth from the Holy Spirit, cannot command, nor grant, nor allow **anything** that is to the detriment of the health of souls, or which returns contempt or damage to a sacrament instituted by Jesus Christ"]. UGO BELLOCCHI (*Tutte le encicliche e i principali documenti pontifici emanati dal 1740*, Libreria editrice vaticana, vol. III, p. 190) translates the **brief** *Quo graviora* in a way that it can be interpreted in the sense of Dominicus: "*Therefore will the Church, which is the pillar and support of the truth, and which finds itself in time being taught by the Spirit about any and all truth, be able to command, grant and allow* ***them*** [the innovators] *to degrade everything to ruin of souls and to shame and prejudice of the Sacrament instituted by Christ?*". Here the text seems to refer to the innovators, so the Pope would not speak of the impossibility - for the Church - of allowing a rite or discipline that is not good. Let us then see the original Latin text and the Italian translation of Gregory XVI's **brief** in the *Enchiridion of the Encyclicals*, vol. II, EDB, Bologna, n. 691. Since Dominicus wrongly invokes the context, I will also give him the immediate context:

"*And all the more to be deplored is the blind temerity of men who want to radically reform the most holy institution of sacramental penance,* ***who outrageously criticize the Church and accuse her of error*** *as if, by commanding annual confession, granting indulgences with the condition of the annexed confession,* ***allowing*** *private mass and the daily celebration of the holy mysteries, it had weakened that very healthy institution and had taken away its strength and effectiveness. Therefore, could the Church, which is the foundation and pillar of truth, perhaps command, grant,* ***allow, what*** *would cause the ruin of souls and would dishonor and damage a sacrament instituted by Christ?*". In this translation, Dominicus' version is clearly incorrect. The Church cannot allow evil because it is divinely assisted, therefore infallible and impeccable. And here is the Latin text: "*Ergo ne Ecclesia, quae est columna et firmamentum veritatis quamque omnem veritatem a Spiritu Sancto in dies edoceri constat* ***ea*** *poterit praecipere, concedere, permittere,* ***quae*** *in salutis animarum perniciem et in dedecus ac detrimentum Sacramenti a Christo instituti vergant?"* (the translation by Bellocchi and the Libreria Editrice Vaticana is clearly incorrect). Here is the context of the entire Brief: the German innovators condemned by Gregory XVI argued that the discipline of the Church needed to be updated (it is impressive how they proposed the same reforms implemented later by Vatican II! Read the whole text...). As for the immediate context, they criticized the Church for having introduced or permitted uses that in their opinion damaged the sacrament of penance. Gregory XVI replied to them that it is impossible that the Church (assisted daily by the Spirit of truth) can even allow anything that damages souls or dishonors a sacrament instituted by Christ. We all affirm that the new mass, the new liturgical and canonical discipline, cause the ruin of souls and bring dishonor to the sacraments. Now Gregory XVI, following Pius VI, teaches that this is impossible on the part of the Church. So, either the N.O.M. it is good, or IT IS NOT the work of the Church and a legitimate Pope.

10) On p. 241 Dominicus also distorts the meaning of DS 2633 (Pius VI, *Auctorem fidei*) where the Pope teaches that "*the current order of the liturgy received and approved by the Church*" cannot come "*from a forgetfulness of the principles by which it must be governed*". For Dominicus this quote does not pose any problem for the case of the new mass, since it "*was not received and approved peacefully in the Church*" as there was "*traditionalist reaction*". Pius VI's meaning was that the liturgy of the Church could not be bad because it was approved and received by the hierarchical Church (by the Pope) and not because it was also received and approved by the bishops or by the people. Proof of this is that some bishops in office (Jansenists), including the one condemned by Pius VI (Scipione de' Ricci), opposed the current liturgy (e.g. the cult of the Sacred Heart)! Like the "Jansenist reaction", the "traditionalist reaction" is worthless if the "*current liturgy*" is received and approved by the Pope.

"The election of the Pope". Reactions and comments on one of our articles

We publish below some observations concerning the article on the election of the Pope and the current situation in the Church.

Sodalitium

ERRATA CORRIGE

In the last issue of Sodalitium (no. 55, p. 18), in don Ricossa's article entitled *L'elezione del Papa*, a quotation from Jesuit Father Edmund James O'Reilly is reported, a quote adopted by Bishop Mark Pivarunas

against the objections to sedevacantism made by Father Scott of the Society of Saint Pius X.

Unfortunately - following the report of some readers - we realized that Father O'Reilly's quote was poorly translated by us from the English original, hence the thought of the author (and also that of Don Ricossa) is difficult to understand.

We had in fact translated it like this:

"*non nel senso che un interregno che coprisse l'intero periodo* [del Grande Scisma d'Occidente, N.d.R.] *sarebbe stato impossibile o inconciliabile con le promesse di Cristo, perché questo è evidente, ma che di fatto non ci fu questo interregno*"

["*not in the sense that an interregnum covering the entire period* [of the Great Schism of the West, editor's note] *would have been impossible or irreconcilable with the promises of Christ, because this is evident, but that in fact there was no such interregnum*"].

The phrase, however, was translated like this on the site internet by Bishop Pivarunas (www.CMRI.org): "*non che un interregno che fosse durato per l'intero periodo sarebbe stato impossibile o incoerente con le promesse di Cristo, poiché questo non è in alcun modo manifesto, ma che, come dato di fatto, non ci fu tale interregno*" ["*not that an interregnum lasting the entire period would have been impossible or inconsistent with the promises of Christ, for this is not in any way manifest, but that, as a matter of fact, there was no such interregnum*"].

For greater clarity, we report the English original text in the part that interests us:

"*not that an interregnum covering the whole period would have been impossible or inconsistent with the promises of Christ, for this is by no means manifest, but that, as a matter of fact, there was not such an interregnum*".

We apologize to the readers and to Bishop Pivarunas for the unintentional inconvenience.

We also point out that this error has absolutely no influence on the thesis supported by Don Ricossa in his article. In fact, Don Ricossa totally agrees with Bishop Pivarunas regarding his response to the first objection of Father Scott and Archbishop Lefebvre to sedevacantism: the sole fact that the Apostolic See has been vacant for more than 40 years does not go against the visibility and indefectibility of the Church, as the quote from Father O'Reilly confirms. On the other hand, Don Ricossa thinks that Bishop Pivarunas' response to the second objection of Father Scott and Archbishop Lefebvre (the one concerning the need to always have electors of the Pope) is insufficient, and must be completed by the clarifications adduced by the "Thesis of Cassiciacum". This was what we wanted to demonstrate and we demonstrated in the article *L'elezione del Papa*, which therefore retains all its value.

An article by Professor Tello

Professor Tomás Tello Corraliza (from Mérida, Spain) sent us a very kind letter on January 22, 2003 regarding the article "*L'elezione del Papa*", accompanied by one of his essays (in Spanish and English) dating back to 1994, on the same topic. Professor Tello is an absolute sedevacantist, and therefore supports the possibility and necessity of a papal election. His writing, previously unpublished, has since then been published in a German translation by the magazine *Einsicht* (n. 1, February 2003, pp. XXXIII-15-23). We will limit ourselves to brief observations. The Author, after having posed the problem (the impossibility of an election by the college of cardinals, and the need for a supplementary law to proceed with the election of the Pope), presents to the reader, following contemporary authors who have already dealt with this subject, quotes from seven "classical" authors: Cajetan, Vitoria, Saint Robert Bellarmine, John of Saint Thomas, Dom Grea, Billot and Journet. We have already seen - in our article "*L'elezione del Papa*" - what to make of Cajetan's doctrine taken up by Journet. Dom Gréa thinks that only the Cardinals, or the

Roman Church, can elect the Pope. Bellarmine thinks that this is up to the General Council in agreement with the Roman Church (clergy of Rome, suburbicarian bishops: after all this is also Cajetan's position). The other authors attribute the supplementary power to elect the Pope to the imperfect General Council (imperfect because it is, precisely, without a Pope). The most interesting quotes made by Tello (following Johas) are those of the theologian Francisco de Vitoria (1483-1546), taken from his work *De potestate Ecclesiae*: Tello says he follows Vitoria's position. After having established that - in the absence of Cardinals - the election of the Pope belongs to the entire Church, Vitoria specifies however that it is necessary to exclude from this right the simple faithful (n. 19) and the clergy inferior to the episcopate (n. 20); which is what we wrote in our own article.

At no. 21 Vitoria then explains his thesis: in this supposed extraordinary case (lack of Cardinals) the electors would be the Bishops gathered in the Council. Prof. Tello thinks he has thus proved his thesis: the electors of the Pope still exist (in act): they are the "faithful" Bishops. It is here, however, that Prof. Tello, and others with him, are wrong. In our article (pp. 19-21) we have amply demonstrated that not all Bishops can participate by divine right in a Council - and therefore in a possible papal election - but only Bishops with jurisdiction. This is what Cajetan says. But it is also what Vitoria states in the quotes cited by Tello, when he explains that the Bishops could elect the Pope because "*they are the Shepherds of the flock*" under the Supreme Pontiff, which is true only and exclusively the Residential bishops who govern – with a diocese – a portion of the flock. Having excluded the titular bishops from the election (even more so the "sedevacantist" bishops consecrated without a Roman mandate), the conclavists find themselves without electors, unless they accept as such the materialiter bishops (or cardinals), which instead they refuse to do.

An interesting novelty in the position of *La Tour de David*

La Tour de David is the sedevacantist magazine edited by Abbé Xavier Grossin. In their January edition (n. 20, pp. 6-8), Abbé Grossin talks about our article, supporting among other things the same position as Don Paladino (and L. H. Remy): election of the Pope through Saint Peter the apostle. Apparently, Abbé Grossin's article is violently contrary to ours (Don Ricossa is incorrigible, sins against the Holy Spirit, resists grace, becomes increasingly stupid, writes nonsense, definitively condemns himself to the absurd, is in bad faith, etc.). In reality, upon a dispassionate reading, one realizes that Abbé Grossin concedes much to our position, to the point that one can ask him if - without realizing it - he himself does not actually adopt the abhorred Thesis of Cassiciacum!

His admissions can be reduced to two. In the context of the "apparitionist" thesis, he admits that the person chosen by St. Peter should then be canonically elected by the imperfect General Council ("*the designation on the part of St. Peter strictly takes nothing away from apostolicity. The imperfect General Council could ratify the choice made by St. Peter and regulate things canonically. The designated man would necessarily be a bishop or should be consecrated bishop, which would make him the legitimate successor of the Apostles. I don't see where the problem is*") (p. 8). In this way it turns out that, in the final analysis, it is the Council that elects the Pope, and not Saint Peter. And that's our position.

But who has the right to be part of the imperfect General Council? On this point, Abbé Grossin makes an important concession: "*nous avons admis que des vrais évêques pouvaient abjurer et se reunir en concile général imparfait*" ["*we admitted that true bishops could abjure and meet in an imperfect general council*", tr.] (p. 8). Very good! But perhaps he doesn't realize that - with this statement - he essentially accepts the Thesis that he claims to reject.

Exposing our position ("*establishing that it is to the imperfect General Council, i.e.* ***to the residential bishops, who possess ordinary jurisdiction over a territory, that the legal right to elect a pope belongs in the event of the absence of the Sacred College***") the Abbé Grossin can only approve of it, writing: "very good" "trés bien" (p. 6). Not only this. He clearly admits that these Bishops would be those who currently belong to what he calls the "conciliar sect". Naturally he imposes conditions on it: the abjuration of conciliar heresies, the rejection of the conciliar sect, having been validly consecrated. As for the first two (which then constitute a single condition) we are substantially in agreement, regardless of what Abbé Grossin says. As for the fact that said Bishops must be validly consecrated, we would like to point out the following: per se, the Bishop (and even the Bishop of Rome) enjoys jurisdiction even before receiving the sacrament of orders (even more so episcopal consecration). Pius XII, among other things, expressly recalled this in the case of the election of a layman to the papacy. It would therefore not be necessary for said Bishops - after recanting their errors - to be already consecrated: it is sufficient that they want to be consecrated (at least conditionally). In any case, Abbé Grossin reminds us that Eastern Bishops are validly consecrated. But enough of this: with regard to the solution proposed by *Sodalitium*, *La Tour de David*, writes: "*we do not reject this possibility at all*" (p. 6). But if we agree, why so many insults?

(P.S. According to Abbé Grossin, *Sodalitium* would identify the conciliar sect and the Church, therefore the Institute would be "*the extreme right of the conciliar sect*". Naturally this identification exists only in the imagination of Abbé Grossin. We note among other things that if, for Abbé Grossin, a validly consecrated Bishop of the "*conciliar sect*" could, after abjuration, become by the very fact a Bishop of the Catholic Church, this means that he himself does not believe much in the juridical existence of the "*conciliar sect*").

Saint Peter (Bronze statue in the Basilica of Saint Peter at the Vatican)

Our position on the Mass of May 24th at Santa Maria Maggiore.

No to the peaceful coexistence of the Catholic Mass and the rite of Paul VI!
Yes to the integral defense of the entire Catholic faith, and not just the Mass of Saint Pius V!
Yes to the condemnation of all errors contrary to this Faith,
no to any compromise with heresy!

As everyone knows, on the 24th of May, 2003, Cardinal Dario Castrillon Hoyos, the president of the Pontifical Commission *Ecclesia Dei*, celebrated Holy Mass according to the missal promulgated by Saint Pius V, in the Patriarchal Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome. The Mass was celebrated on the initiative of Calogero Cammarata, president of the association *Inter multiplices UNA VOX* on behalf of numerous faithful, "*to manifest their cordial adhesion to the Successor of Peter and raise for him, on the 25th anniversary of his pontificate, a choral prayer to Mary in the context of the year dedicated to the Holy Rosary*" (Message of Cardinal Angelo Sodano, Secretary of State).

Cardinal Castrillon Hoyos' sermon

In his sermon, Cardinal Castrillon Hoyos repeated his homage to John Paul II: "*It is to John Paul II, our beloved Pope, that our thoughts, our prayers, our profound and affectionate sense of ecclesial communion go. In these twenty-five years, his life and his supreme apostolic ministry are characterized by his tireless defense of the Truth, by his total dedication to the cause of the unity of the Church....*". Regarding the rite of the Mass, the President of the *Ecclesia Dei* recalled the "*benevolent welcome*" of John Paul II towards the faithful attached to the Mass of Saint Pius V, limited however to those who recognize "*the legitimacy of the renewed rite*". The rite of Paul VI and that of Saint Pius V would manifest "*the same faith in the Eucharistic Mystery*" for which - concludes the Prelate - "*we are all called to unity in truth, with mutual respect for the diversity of opinions...*". Honestly, nothing else could have been expected from the President of the *Ecclesia Dei* Commission.

The position of the Society of Saint Pius X

The position of the Society of Saint Pius X was expressed by Abbé Simoulin, the Superior of the Italian district, in the magazine *Roma felix* (July 2003). Addressing "*our dear friend Calogero Cammarata*" Abbé Simoulin writes: "*I want him to know* (but he knew it from the beginning) *that the Society, which did not want to intervene so as not to create some confusion, followed things with interest and sympathy, and thanks him for having allowed the Holy Mass to regain possession of the altar on which our founder had offered it on Saturday 24 May 1975*". Abbé Simoulin continues, underlining again the embarrassing parallel between Archbishop Lefebvre and Castrillon Hoyos: "*Although not officially present in 2003, this 2003 Mass is the victory of his faithfulness in continuing Archbishop Lefebvre's battle at the altar of Santa Maria Maggiore in 1975*". Abbé Simoulin concludes by addressing the Colombian Cardinal in pathetic tones: "*Courage, Eminence! What you did was nice but... it's not enough. (...) It is necessary to continue and make the Mass of your ordination come alive (...). Your Eminence, for goodness' sake, make this Mass*

come alive which was (sic [1]) *the joy of your youth, help the Mass make the Mass live, and you will have achieved the greatest thing and the most necessary thing for the Catholic Church*". In the editorial of *La Tradizione Cattolica* (n. 54, 3/2003, p. 6), Abbé Simoulin also quotes his direct superior, Bishop Fellay: "*The Priestly Society of Saint Pius X rejoices in the celebration of the mass of Saint Pius V by His Eminence Cardinal Castrillon Hoyos in Santa Maria Maggiore. It is the first time in the last thirty years. We sincerely hope that this act will be followed by many others with a view to restoring Tradition in the Church*".

Our Position

The May issue of the bulletin *Notre-Dame de la Sainte-Espérance* (n. 161), written by Abbé Belmont before the celebration of the 24th, expresses in a few strictly doctrinal lines what is also our position on the matter. "*The Holy Mass* – writes Abbé Belmont – *is the heart of the Catholic Church, its treasure, its reason for being. The status of the Catholic rite of the Mass cannot in any case be that of a simple permission; nor that of a peaceful coexistence with a Protestant rite, foreign to the Catholic faith. The testimony of faith cannot be content with being 'in favor of the mass of Saint Pius V'; it rules it to be 'against the new rite'. If Paul VI had instituted a rite in conformity with the Catholic faith and in the spirit of tradition (would it even have been possible? That is another question), the problem would be different. But the rite of Paul VI is the fruit of false doctrines, it is the expression of another religion, entirely centered on man, entirely concerned with earthly life, entirely forgetful of the glory of God and his an indefeasible law, entirely negating the kingship of Our Lord Jesus Christ. This spirit is inscribed in the marrow of the new rite; it is impossible to accept it, even as a temporary neighbor: it is a cancer that must be rejected by the Church.*

The Holy Mass is a sacramental rite; it is the sacrament par excellence, source and summit of all the others. It occupies first place in the order of dignity and effectiveness. But in the order of realization, the Mass depends on the sacrament of Baptism and the Sacrament of Holy Orders. And here is a new concern, all the more serious for the fact that it is unverifiable.

(...) The rite of priestly ordination has been modified in form; the rite of episcopal consecration has undergone a profound upheaval [inversing ordination and consecration is more accurate]. *And their validity? At the very least they are not guaranteed by the Church, there is real doubt, which in practice forces them to be considered invalid. If there is coexistence between the two rites, one holy and one dubiously valid, in the same churches; if there is coexistence of two priesthoods, one valid and one doubtful, on the same altars; what will be in the tabernacle? Jesus Christ, true God and true man, or simple bread. What will allow us to discern them? Nothing. We will have confusion, uncertainty, idolatry on the one hand, sacrilege on the other. Is this the return of the splendor of the Church? Is this what we fought for? What is not conceivable from the sacramental point of view is even less so from the point of view of doctrine. The holy sacrifice of the Mass is the Mystery of faith: it is necessarily preceded, accompanied and followed by the teaching of the Catholic faith, in order to be worthily celebrated and to produce healthy and lasting fruit in souls. Can it be desired that it take its place among false doctrines, in the midst of a harmful teaching, in a general desertion of the faith and of the sacrament of penance? For the honor of God, for the certainty of the sacraments, for the integrity of the faith, for the severity in grace and truth, the Holy Mass must not be separated from its triple Catholic character: catholicity of the rite, catholicity of the minister, catholicity of communion. Even if it can be said that God, in His mercy, can use anything to bring back poor lost souls, it is licit for us to desire or provide exclusively that which is integrally in conformity with the*

Catholic faith and the sanctity of the sacraments".

Sodalitium makes these words of Abbé Belmont its own. Those who attended the Mass on May 24, those who followed it with "*interest and sympathy*", have instead - consciously or not - made the words of Cardinal Castrillon Hoyos their own: admitted the legitimacy of the new rite and of the one who ordered its celebration, John Paul II, as well as admitting the fact that, "*in these 25 years*" he had tirelessly defended the Truth, when instead, in reality, he constantly spread error.

Cardinal Castrillon Hoyos

Note

1) "*Che è stato*", masculine, not the feminine "*stata*" as it should be in Italian. Translator's note.